

ALACTIC
BONUS
EPISODE GUIDE

'ALIEN': INTERVIEWS WITH THE SFX TEAM

STARLOG

UK
85P
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Number 27
OCTOBER

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

Help From Above?

The
FX Behind
"STAR TREK"

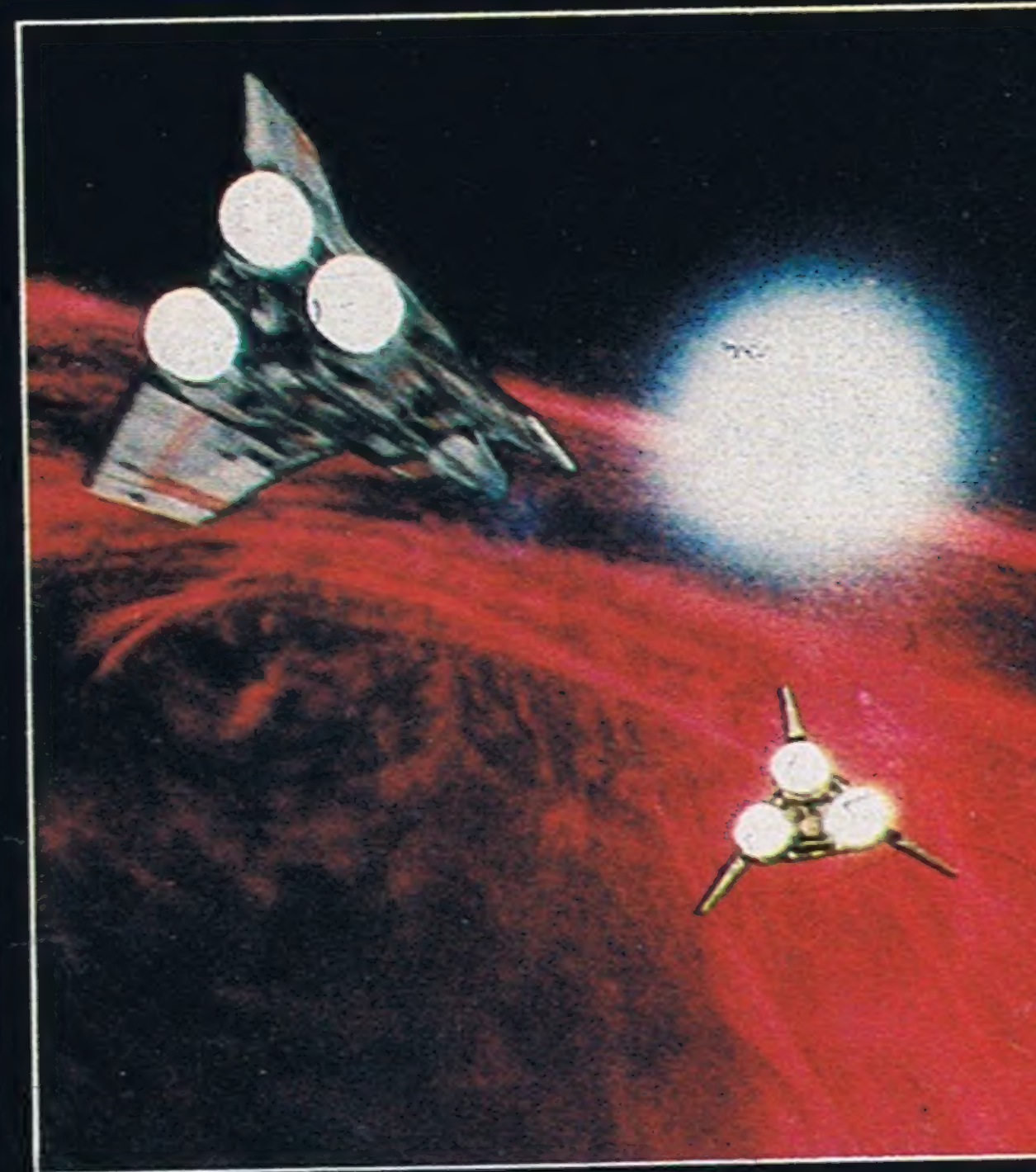
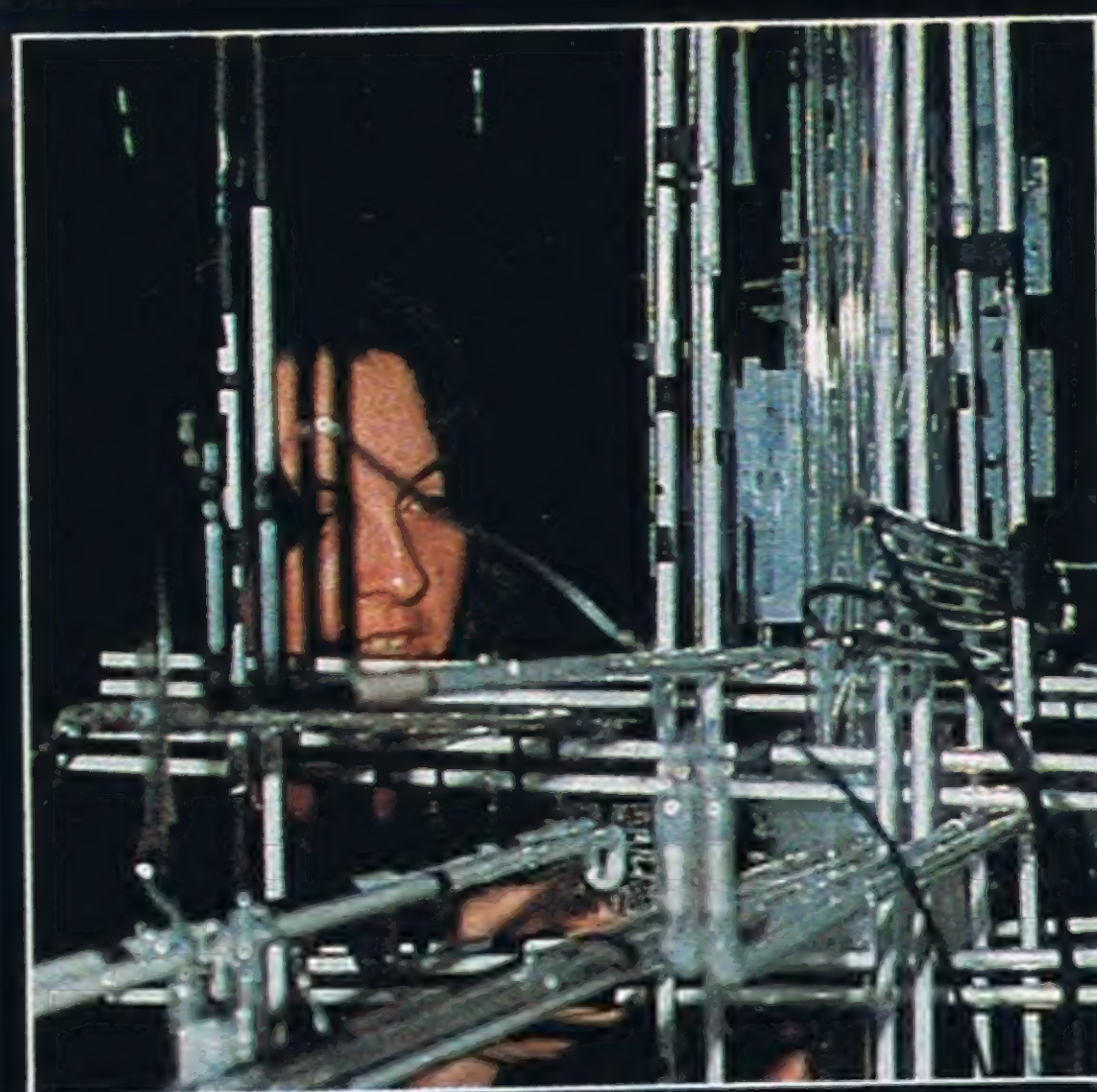
TV Spectacular:
"The Martian
Chronicles"

A Day on the Set of
Disney's
"The Black Hole"

Kid-Vid Preview

The Brothers Hildebrandt
Epic Fantasy—"Urshurak"

"Time After Time"



MAKING THE MINIATURES

The Opticals Story



Original Handpainted "Cels" in limited editions from **STAR TREK** and ...



1A The crew of the Enterprise



11 Jihad-Composite of aliens



16 Beyond the Farthest Star



25 The CounterClock Incident



9 The Ambergris Element-Sursnake



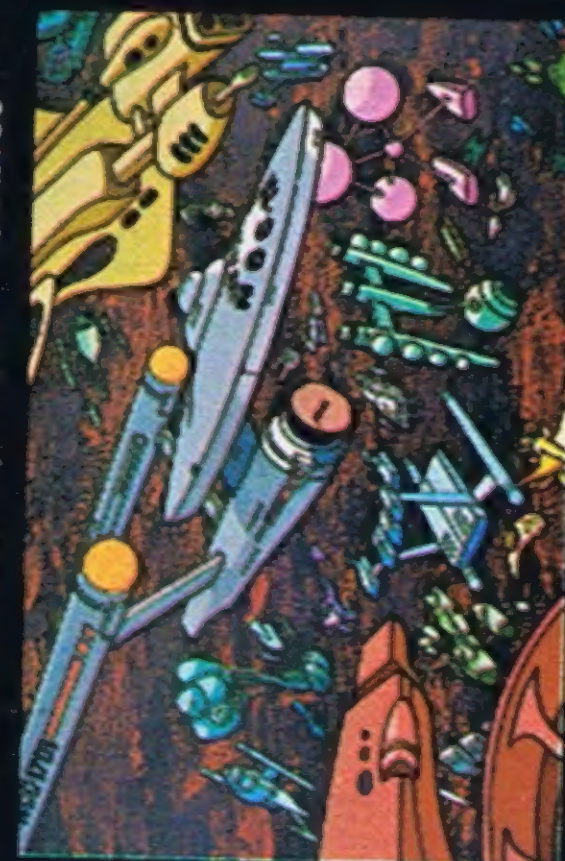
15 The Enterprise & Aqua Shuttle



23 About to battle a Klingon



6 More Tribbles, More Troubles



14 The Time Trap



22 Time Warp (Classic)



5 Yesteryear



12 Spock, the boy atop I'Chaya



20 Kukulkan & the Enterprise



00 Title scene from Star Trek



B1 Batman and Robin



G1 The Groovie Goolies



B2 Batman, Robin and BatMite



A1 The Archies



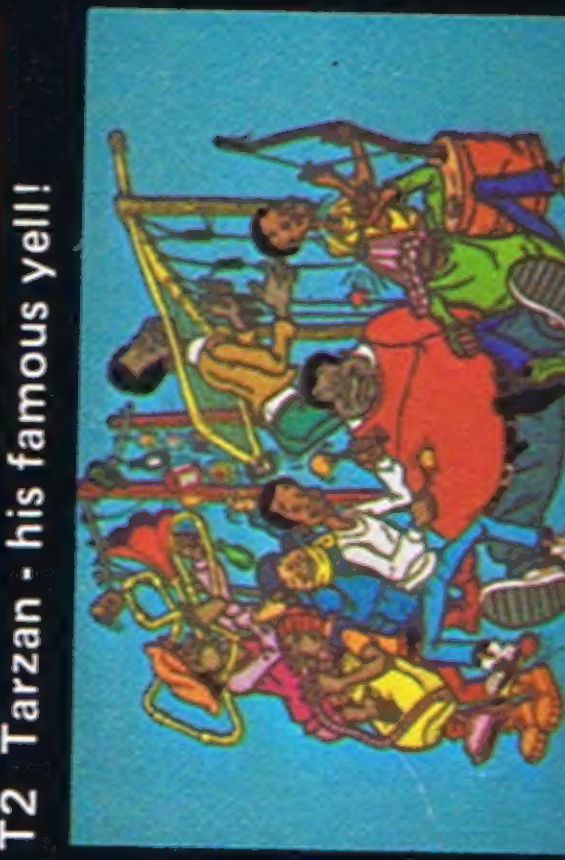
B4 Batman and all the villains



RO Return to Oz (Classic)



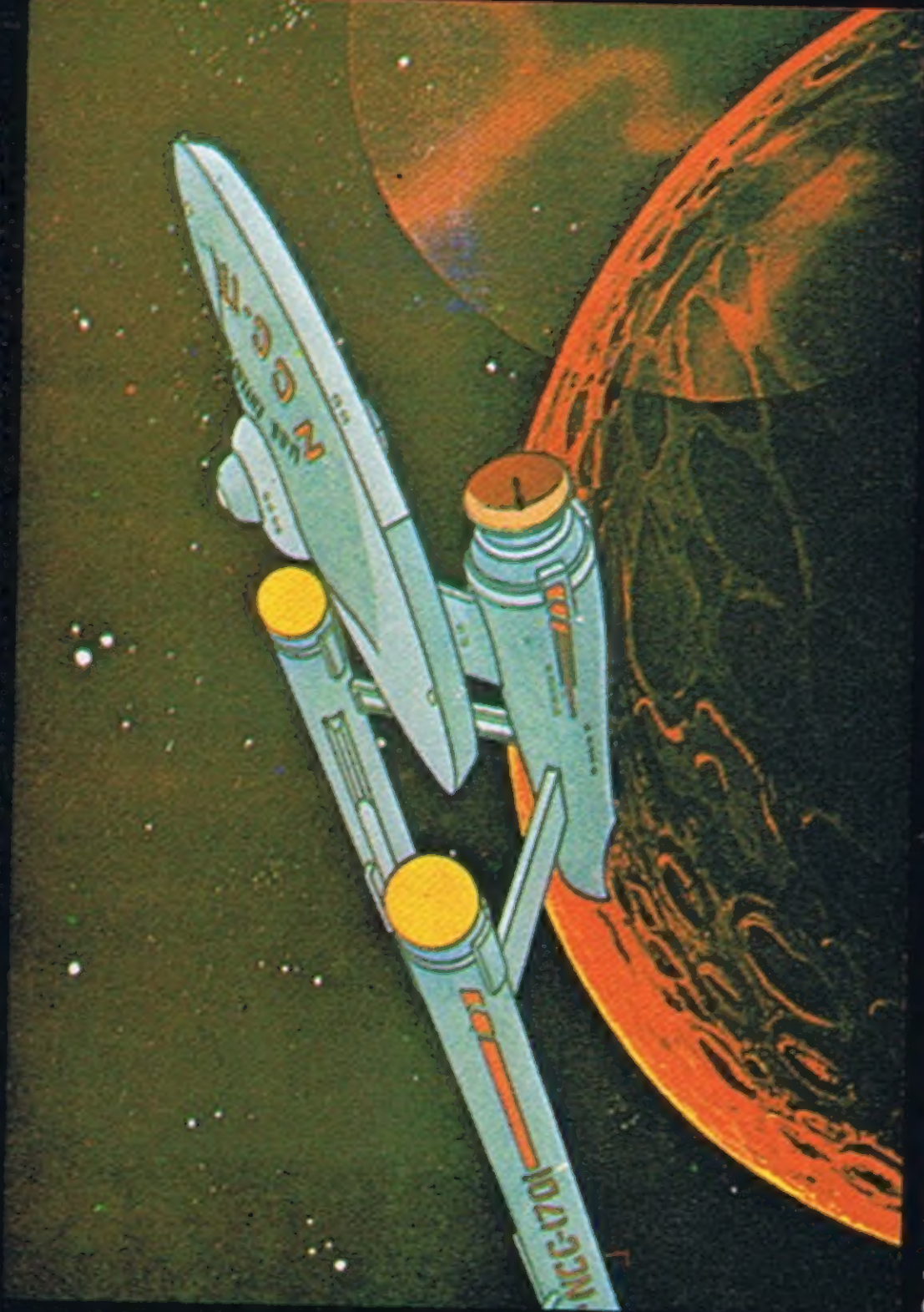
T2 Tarzan - his famous yell!



FA Fat Albert & the Cosby Kids

COLLECTOR'S ART

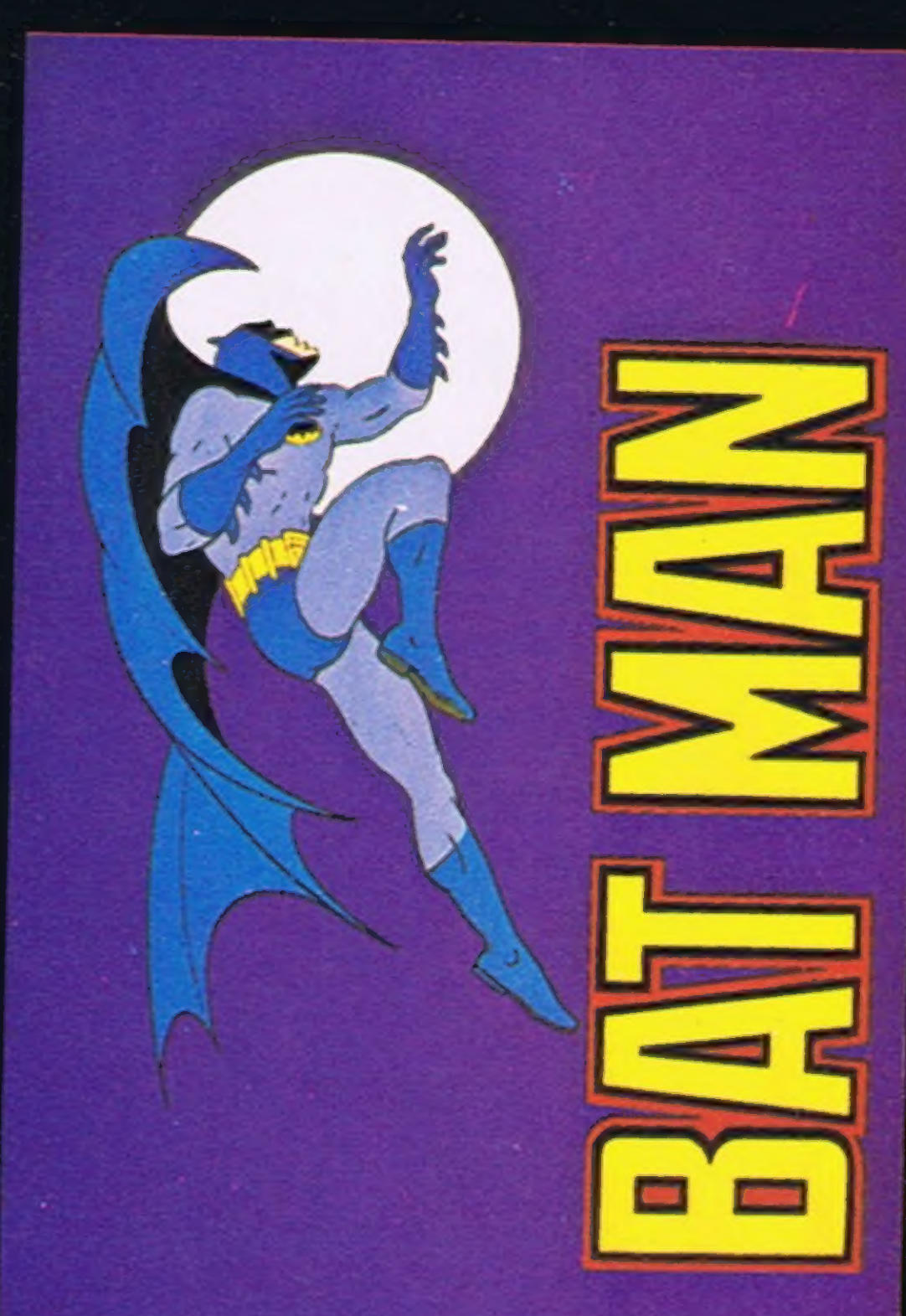
from Television's most popular animated shows



24 STAR TREK



T1 TARZAN



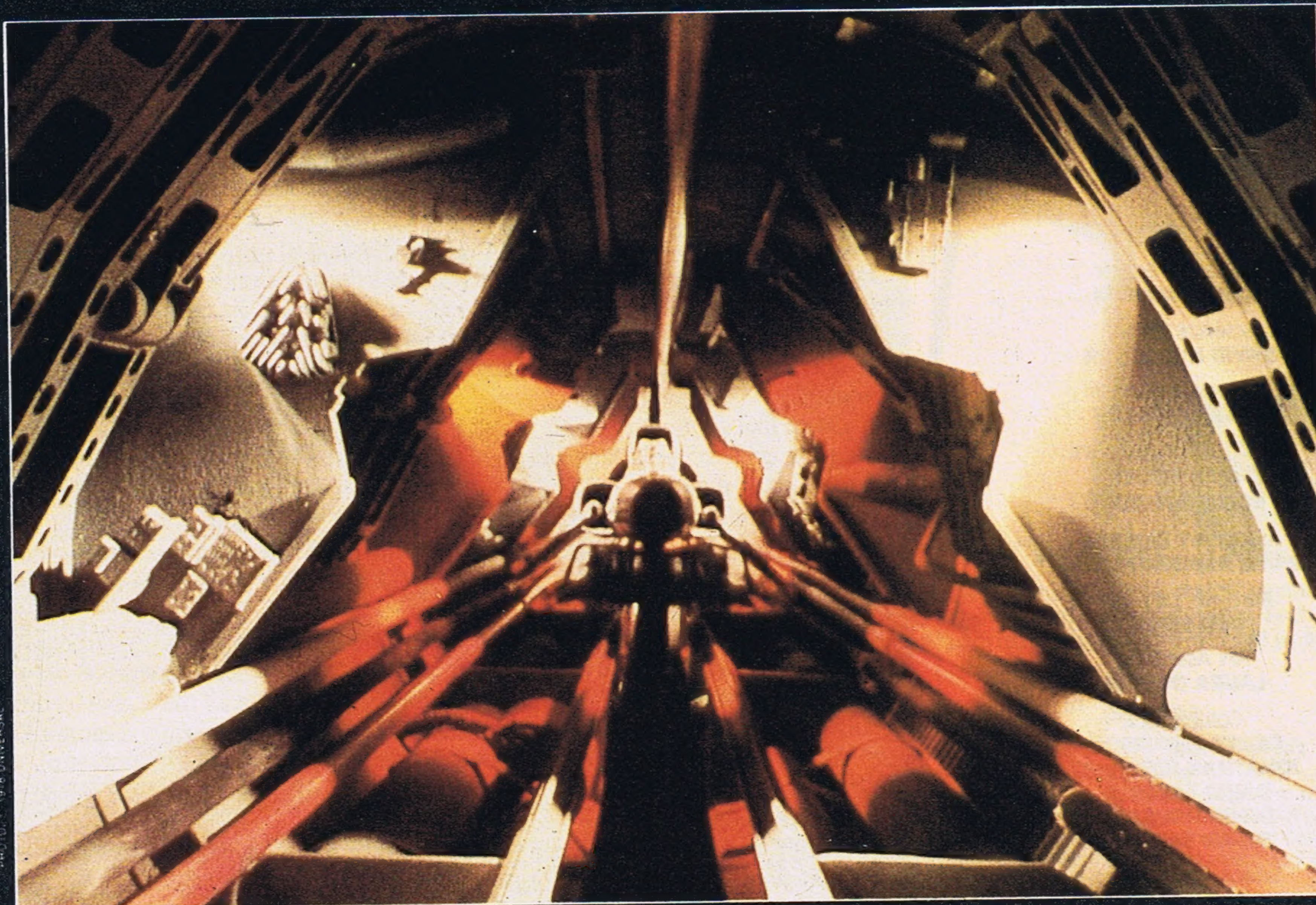
B3 BATMAN

SEE ORDER FORM ON P. 71

STARLOG

OCTOBER 1979
NUMBER 27

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FUTURE



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Business and Editorial Offices:

O'Quinn Studios, Inc.
475 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

Publishers
NORMAN JACOBS
KERRY O'QUINN

Editor
HOWARD ZIMMERMAN

Art Director
CHEH LOW

Managing Editor
BOB WOODS

Associate Editor
ROBERT MARTIN

Science Editor
DAVID HUTCHISON

West Coast Editor
DAVID HOUSTON

Contributing Editors
DAVID HIRSCH
ROBIN SNELSON

Assoc. Art Director
ELAINE ASHBURN-SILVER

Asst. Art Director
BOB SEFCIK

Art Assistant
LAURA O'BRIEN

Columnists
GERRY ANDERSON
JONATHAN EBERHART
DAVID GERROLD
DAVID HOUSTON
SUSAN SACKETT

Space Art Advisor
RON MILLER

Special Projects
TOM O'STEEN
PETER MOSEN

Associate Publisher
IRA FRIEDMAN

Assistant Publisher
RITA EISENSTEIN

Production Assistants: Beverly Gerdin-Campbell,
Susan Oster, Angelique Trouvere.

Contributors This Issue: Nick Alder, Howard Cruse, Jim Dow, David Garber, H. R. Giger/Big O Publishing, The Brothers Hildebrandt, Brian Johnson, Carey H. Melcher, Craig Miller, David Robman, Wayne Smith, Steve Swires.

For Advertising Information: Ira Friedman, Rita Eisenstein (212) 689-2830.

ABOUT THE COVER: The "City of Angels" from the TV series "Battlestar Galactica" graces this month's cover. It was made largely of neon tubing and photographed through a stack of filters and gauzes. This was the first major model built at Universal's Hartland facility after John Dykstra relinquished the show. In the inset, artist Wendy Vanguard adds detail to the model, and Viper fighters soar through red laser effects.

ABOUT THE CONTENTS PAGE: A close-up view of the "Galactica"'s launch tube. This issue's special center section is devoted to the story behind the birth, death, and future life of the series, as well as a complete episode guide (see p. 35).

FROM THE BRIDGE

This month, let's think seriously.

In 1955 George Pal decided to translate Willy Ley's book, *The Conquest of Space*, into a theatrical film. He intended to dramatize the exciting scientific projections of the book—the steps by which man might break away from Earth for the first time and begin exploring other worlds. Paramount assigned a committee of writers to create a fictional screenplay, and by the time they finished hashing it out, the audience was left with one of the most frustrating films a true science-fiction fan could imagine.

Those of you who have suffered through this movie know that the main character, a scientist who spearheads the designing and building of our first permanent space station, a giant wheel (beautifully visualized by Chesley Bonestell), is put in command of a spaceship aimed at Mars. For totally unknown reasons, this brilliant man begins a steady mental deterioration during which he begins reading, then quoting, the Bible and finally decides that God doesn't want the Mars mission to succeed.

Finally the captain makes several attempts to sabotage the ship, kill the crew and destroy every ideal for which he once stood. In the process, he destroys the movie.

Why, you may ask, did the scriptwriters invent and tack onto what would otherwise have been an inspiring vision of triumphant exploration, this paranoid turn toward the Almighty?

A movie like *Conquest of Space* could have been, as Pal originally planned, a pure hymn to science. It could have inspired us with the thought that nothing is too distant for the hand of man—no goal is too unreachable—no task too difficult. It could have shown a distant dream and propelled our hearts and spirits (not to mention our actual spaceships) upward toward the stars. It could have painted a positive and glorious picture of our future in space—which is, after all, one of the main visions we all seek and long for in our love affair with science fiction.

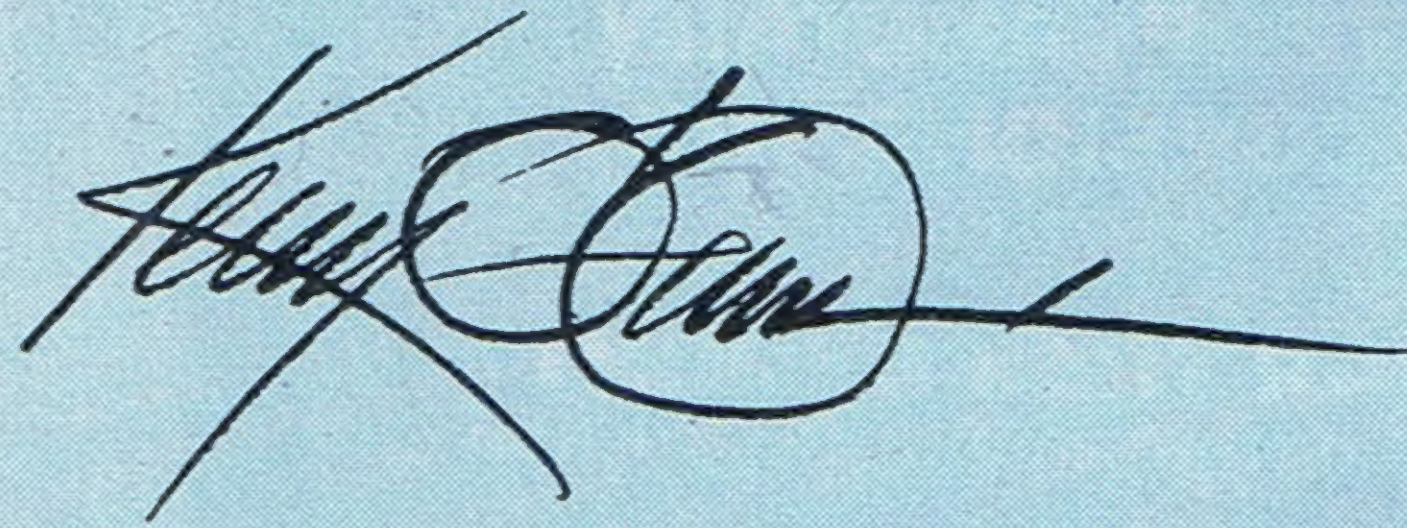
One can only imagine with horror and revulsion the screenwriters conference at which someone first suggested that the drama inherent in landing on Mars was *not enough* to satisfy the dull general public. "We need something to soften all these *cold* technical details," someone probably said. "We need something to *humanize* the captain; he's too rational and purposeful to relate to the ordinary moviegoer."

So, they turned the captain into a religious lunatic, and the hero of the movie became a grade-B mad scientist.

Perhaps the day will come when writers will *stop being afraid* to present pure science as dramatic and inspiring. Perhaps they will learn from movies like *The Andromeda Strain*, in which the suspense and excitement are *derived from* a scientific battle with the dangers of nature—without any interference from or reliance on God. Perhaps they will cease injecting science fiction with homespun religious bromides, scriptural passages and heavenly choirs and allow the cold details of research, the logical minds of scientists and the risks of innovation and exploration to serve as the dramatic elements of science-fiction storytelling.

And perhaps they will finally give the public credit for being able to relate to this kind of drama, being able to understand it and to be emotionally moved by it.

Science-fiction dramas don't need God for excitement—only second-rate script writers do.



Kerry O'Quinn/Publisher

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RULES:

1 PINBALL ART must be exciting, colorful, and full of action. The backglass (the lighted upright box at the top of the playfield, not only adds to the atmosphere of the game, it serves as the billboard to draw players over to that game. The backglass includes the name of the game, the manufacturer's name, the scoring windows, and other necessary information, but mainly it must display a vivid, imaginative explosion of colors and things.

2 STARLOG is the name of this imaginary pinball game, and your assignment is to design and create original art for the backglass (not the playfield). Although the world of STARLOG includes everything in science-fiction, your art cannot represent exact spaceships nor actors nor other trademarked items from specific movies and television shows. It must capture the excitement of science fiction without legal infringements. Designs and characters which are altered can be used, but your own original visions will score higher.

3 BACKGLASS ART must conform to practical requirements: that is, (a) your entry must be a square format, (b) it must include four scoring windows (for 6-digit numbers) with the lettering "1 UP" "2 UP" "3 UP" and "4 UP" by each window to tell players whose turn it is, (c) it must include two small 2-digit windows for "match" number and for game credits, (d) it must include the Bally logo and the STARLOG logo, (e) it must include the lettering "1 to 4 CAN PLAY" and (f) places where "TILT" and "GAME OVER" can appear when lighted from behind.

4 ENTRIES must be submitted on paper or cardboard; rolled and shipped in a tube or packed flat. Although finished backglass art is generally about three feet square, contest art must be a maximum of two feet square—no larger. Any two-dimensional medium is acceptable—paints, markers, colored pencils, but no collage work. Pack securely, and identify each entry with the official entry tag at right (or a facsimile) firmly attached to the back side of the art.

5 ELIGIBILITY is limited to non-professional artists. No employees of Bally or of STARLOG are eligible. All art becomes the property of O'Quinn Studios, Inc. Winners may be reproduced in a future issue of STARLOG or used by Bally as the basis for a future pinball design without compensation beyond the prize awarded. Art will not be returned, so we suggest that you photograph your entry before mailing it, if you want to keep a copy.

6 JUDGING will be handled by members of the STARLOG staff in order to select finalists, and from this group, members of the Bally Art Department will pick the winners. Decisions will be based on the following: (a) Creativity & Imagination, (b) Technical Proficiency, (c) Practicality of Design, and (d) Overall Impact.

7 DEADLINE for receiving entries in our office is Friday, September 14, 1979. Entries received after that date will be notified by card that their submittal will not be judged, but art will not be returned in any case. Winners will be announced in STARLOG No. 31, on sale about December 18, 1979—the special issue coinciding with the premiere of STAR TREK—The Motion Picture.

STAR TREK PINBALL ART CONTEST OFFICIAL ENTRY TAG

(attach securely to back of art)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

()
PHONE # _____

SIZE _____

MEDIUM _____

I understand that art work becomes the property of O'Quinn Studios, Inc. and will not be returned, and further, that winning entries may be reproduced in STARLOG magazine or used by Bally as the basis of a future pinball design without compensation beyond the prize.

SIGNATURE _____

AGE _____

Send entries to:
STARLOG Pinball Art Contest
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New York, NY 10016

DEADLINE: Friday, September 14, 1979

(Entries received after DEADLINE will not be judged and will not be returned.)

COMMUNICATIONS

Because of the large volume of mail we receive, personal replies are impossible. Comments, questions, and suggestions of general interest are appreciated and may be selected for publication. Write:
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 475 Park Avenue South
 8th Floor Suite
 New York, N.Y. 10016

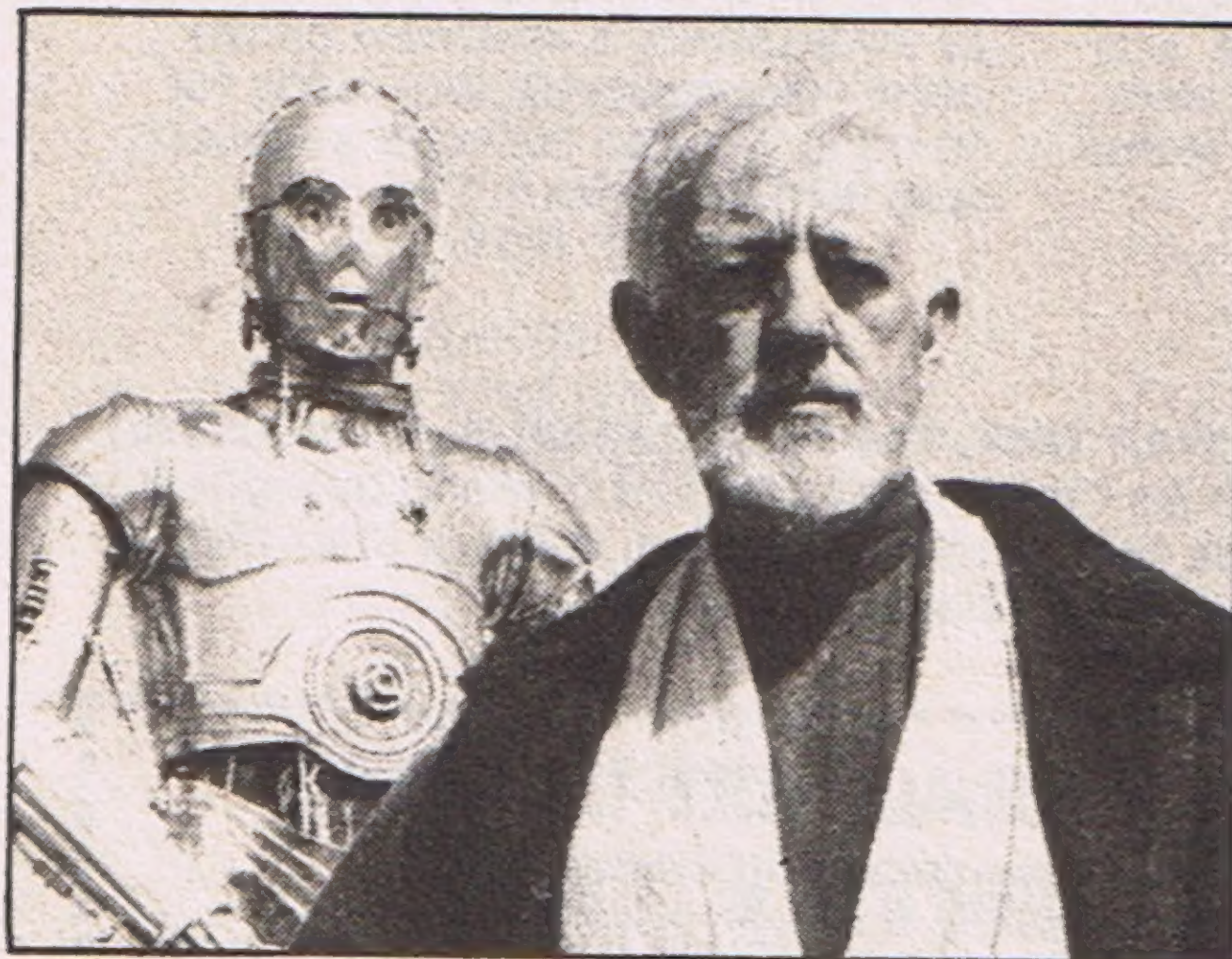
DOUBTER

...I would like to know if the letters for the "Gerry Anderson's Space Report" column are really sent to his own hands and answered in his own words. Also, what's the situation with *Space: 1999*?

Dean Smith Jr.
 202 W. Washington St.
 Harvard, IL 60083

Really, Dean! We're surprised at you. Of course Gerry Anderson has answered every single question that has appeared in the "Space Report." We wouldn't have it any other way. As to your second question, ITC Entertainment has, at the present time, expressed no interest in producing a new series of Space: 1999 nor an original feature film.

THE RETURN OF OBI



...I recall reading that Alec Guinness (Ben Kenobi) will not be starring in the *Star Wars* sequel. Is that true?

Keven Hofeling
 Salt Lake City, UT

While it's true that Guinness will not be starring in The Empire Strikes Back, he will be making a brief appearance in the film. The exact circumstances of Ben Kenobi's reappearance have not been disclosed—many people assume it will be part of a "flashback" sequence.

MONSTER MAVEN

...Are you planning a feature on *Prophecy—The Monster Movie*? I would really like to get the inside story of the film and a good look at the monster. Please let me know if and when you'll have some coverage of this movie.

Juan A. Ramos Jr.
 475 Fifth Ave.
 Brooklyn, NY 11215

Juan, if you run to your local newsstand, you'll see the creature's ugly mug staring straight at you—from the cover of the second issue of our brand-new sister publication, FANGORIA! The same issue also carries the in-depth story of the making of another fright-film blockbuster, Phantomasm—so don't miss it!

MODULAR MOCK-UP

...Congratulations on your anniversary! The special issue was just great, and the story of your beginnings was very interesting. In the letters column of that issue (#24), a Mr. Rabaiotti said that he saw the full-sized *Millennium Falcon* being built for *The Empire Strikes Back*. What happened to the full-sized *Falcon* that was built in one of the soundstages at EMI Elstree Studios? It wasn't destroyed in the fire at the studio, was it?

Dave Wassilak
 4235 California St.
 St. Louis, MO 63111

*Only one set for Stanley Kubrick's The Shining was destroyed by that fire, and that has been rebuilt (at the expense of \$200,000). Actually, the *Falcon* that our Welsh Starlogger reported as being under construction was the same *Falcon* used in the first film. Prior to the shooting of *Empire*, a Welsh construction firm was hired to make some modifications in the design of the original ship. One of these modifications allows the oversized prop to be taken apart and stored between *SW* sequels.*

"TREK" QUERY

...Great stills from *ST-TMP* (STARLOG #25); I can't wait til it comes out. Can you ask Ms. Sackett or find out some more about the reasons behind Abel's firing, though?

Randall Landers
 Mableton, GA

Part of your question is answered on page 26.

FOR SCHALLER FANS

...While reading my recently acquired copy of the STARLOG Photo Guidebook, *Space Art*, I noticed on pages 82-83 a beautiful painting of a balloon probe descending into the atmosphere of Jupiter by Adolf Schaller. I would very much like to have a copy (poster) of that painting to frame.

Edmund LoVerde
 915 Elm Ave.
 River Edge, NJ 07661

...I am highly interested in a painting of yours which appeared in the second issue of *Omni* mag. It is called "Balloon Probe" by Adolf Schaller. I am interested in obtaining a wall print of this remarkable painting.

William Hoffman
 950 Parkwood Dr.
 Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Adolf Schaller's "Jupiter Probe" won the Socie-

ty of Illustrator's national merit award and drew more letters of praise to our offices than any other piece of space art ever printed. In answer to these many requests for a framable print of this breathtaking painting, STARLOG PRESS has included it as one of the 12 works of art in The Space Art Calendar 1980. Designed in an informative calendar format, this is essentially a \$5.95 portfolio of a dozen full-color, suitable-for-framing art prints. See ordering information on page 17 of this issue.

ANDERSON FX MEN



...There is a bit of confusion in your article on *Moonraker* (STARLOG #24). Derek Meddings is listed as having worked on *Space: 1999*, but he wasn't mentioned as such in the credits. Also, in a correction about your TV Address Guide in STARLOG #5, you said that Brian Johnson did not work on Gerry Anderson's supermarionation shows, but in your Photo Guidebook, *Special Effects*, he is listed as SFX director for *Thunderbirds*. I hope that you can clear this up.

Francis Knepper
 Stake, FL

We hope so, too. According to resident Gerry Anderson expert, David Hirsch, Derek Meddings worked on the Gerry Anderson series The Adventures of Twizzle, Torchy the Battery Boy, Four Feather Falls, Supercar, Fireball XL5, Stingray, Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet, Joe 90, The Secret Service and UFO as well as the two Thunderbirds feature films and Journey to the Far Side of the Sun. Brian Johnson (working under his real name of Brian Johncock) was part of the SFX crew for Fireball XL5 and Stingray, was second unit SFX director for the second season of Thunderbirds, and SFX man on UFO, The Protectors, Space: 1999, Day After Tomorrow and the Alien Attack commercial. (See SFX in this issue for more on Johnson's involvement with Nick Alder on Alien.)

MORE MEDDINGS MAGIC

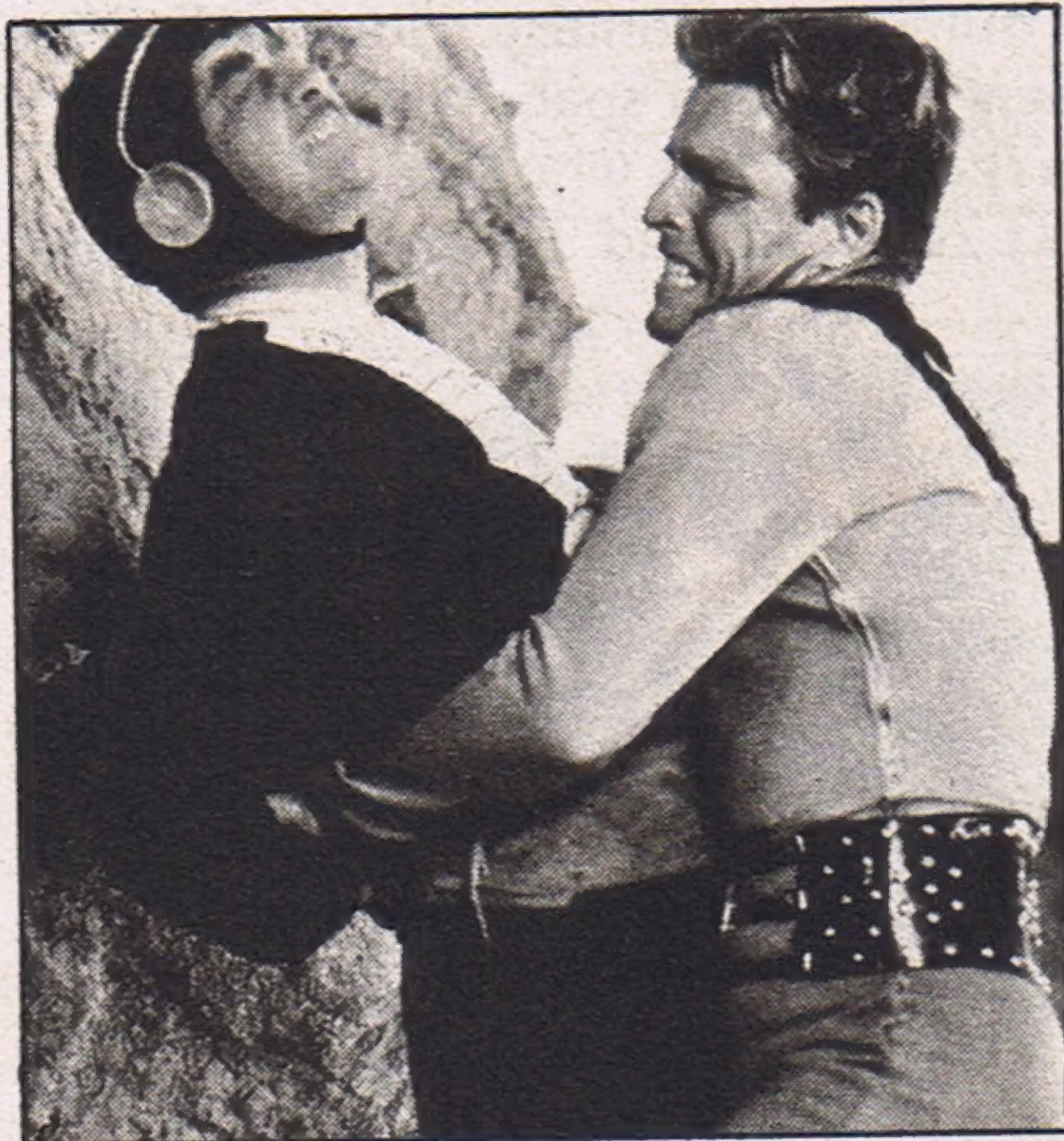
...As I write this, I have just returned from seeing *Moonraker*. WOW!!! Derek Medding's model work is totally incredible—from the open-

ing sequence (with an exploding 747) to the final laser battle in and around the Drax space station (with so many puppets, Meddings must have thought he was back with Gerry Anderson!). It just makes me wonder—is this the work of the same person who built that tinkertoy town for the flood sequence in *Superman*?

Rick Bellows
Miami, FL

In fact, Meddings did not build the miniatures for that Superman sequence. Because of his contractual obligations to Moonraker, Meddings had to leave the crew of Superman—The Movie before all the miniature work had been completed. In the sequence you mention, Meddings' absence does indeed show.

TWO BUCKS



... In the article "Hour 25" (STARLOG #24), you state that Buck Rogers' real first name was Anthony. However, in the book *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* his real name was given as William. Who is right?

Steve Pillwein
35 Shadybrook Cr.
Guelph, Ontario
Canada

Anthony "Buck" Rogers first appeared in Amazing Stories magazine in 1927, in a serialized novel, Armageddon, 2419 A.D. by Philip Nowlan, currently available in paperback from Ace Books. Glen Larson's own version of the Buck Rogers character has the first name William.

SF TOYS

... I read the article "SF Toys of the 80s" in issue #24, and was wondering where I could find the *Galactica* model ship in the Nashville area. A friend and I are planning to use it in a Super-8 film.

Brian Pruett
Nashville, TN

That article was a preview—most of those toys will not be available until early fall. The Elec-

tronic Battlestar Galactica may, in fact, never be produced. See David Houston's article on Galactica merchandising in this issue.

HIGH-SPIRITED CENSOR



... Since you took a strong stand against the censorship of *Star Trek* some time ago, I feel it's my duty to inform you that *Battle of the Planets* is being censored by WYAH, a church-affiliated local TV station. Whenever Zoltar, the evil villain mentions the Spectran High Spirit, there is a wake of silence. (For instance, "G-Force! You will not escape me this time! I swear on the name of the _____!") As far as I can tell, the cuts are being made because the worship of the High Spirit by the Spectrans has been interpreted as a contradiction of Christian monotheism.

Joey Niedbala
Virginia Beach, VA

MORE FEVER

... Joe Mayer's letter ("Episode Guide Fever," STARLOG #24) contained some good suggestions, but I'd like to add a few to the list—how about episode guides for *Jason of Star Command* (the first season), *The Invaders*, *Wonder Woman*, *In Search Of...* and the much-neglected *Quark*?

Joe Curran
San Diego, CA

Joe Mayer's letter brought in a mountain of mail, and we'll be keeping close tabs on EG favorites from here on in. This month we're featuring the Battlestar Galactica guide; Wonder Woman's adventures will be chronicled in our next issue. Other guides now being compiled include Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, The Six Million Dollar Man, The Bionic Woman, Project UFO and the long-awaited Man from Atlantis. One of the most-requested shows for the episode guide series, Kolchak—The Night Stalker, will be appearing very soon in FANGORIA.

"ALIEN" CREDITS

... In the interview with *Alien* producer Walter Hill (STARLOG #24), the writer states that Giler

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and Hill adapted Dan O'Bannon's material for the final shooting script. According to an O'Bannon interview published elsewhere, director Scott filmed the original version—not the rewrite. Mr. Hill seems bent on discrediting O'Bannon, however politely. Personally, I'm inclined to believe O'Bannon.

Randy Turnbull
2195 Jamie Dr.
Memphis TN 38116

In our own O'Bannon interview (STARLOG #23), the Alien creator stated that the Giler-Hill version was used as the shooting script. O'Bannon further stated that, in the course of Alien's filming and editing, Scott made several changes in the script that brought it much closer to this original conception. Jill was definitely not attempting to discredit O'Bannon—it was only with unwillingness that he replied to certain statements made by O'Bannon in the earlier interview.

CORRECTION

... The color photos by Karl Bosselmann used in "SF in Bronze" (STARLOG #25), failed to mention the full credit: © 1979 Karl Bosselmann, Transworld Photography, PO Box 1058, Sedona, AZ 86336.

NEW FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF STARLOG

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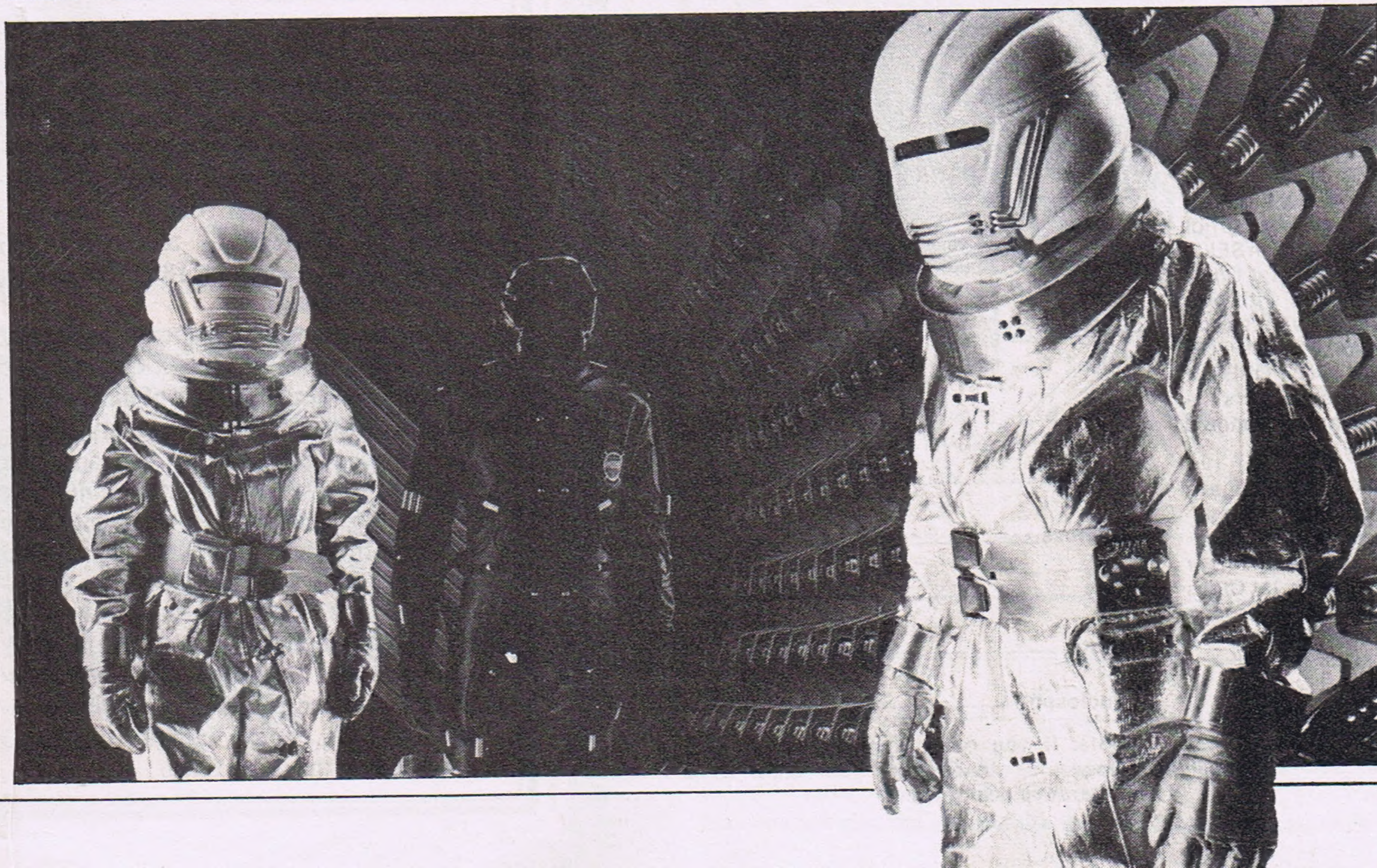
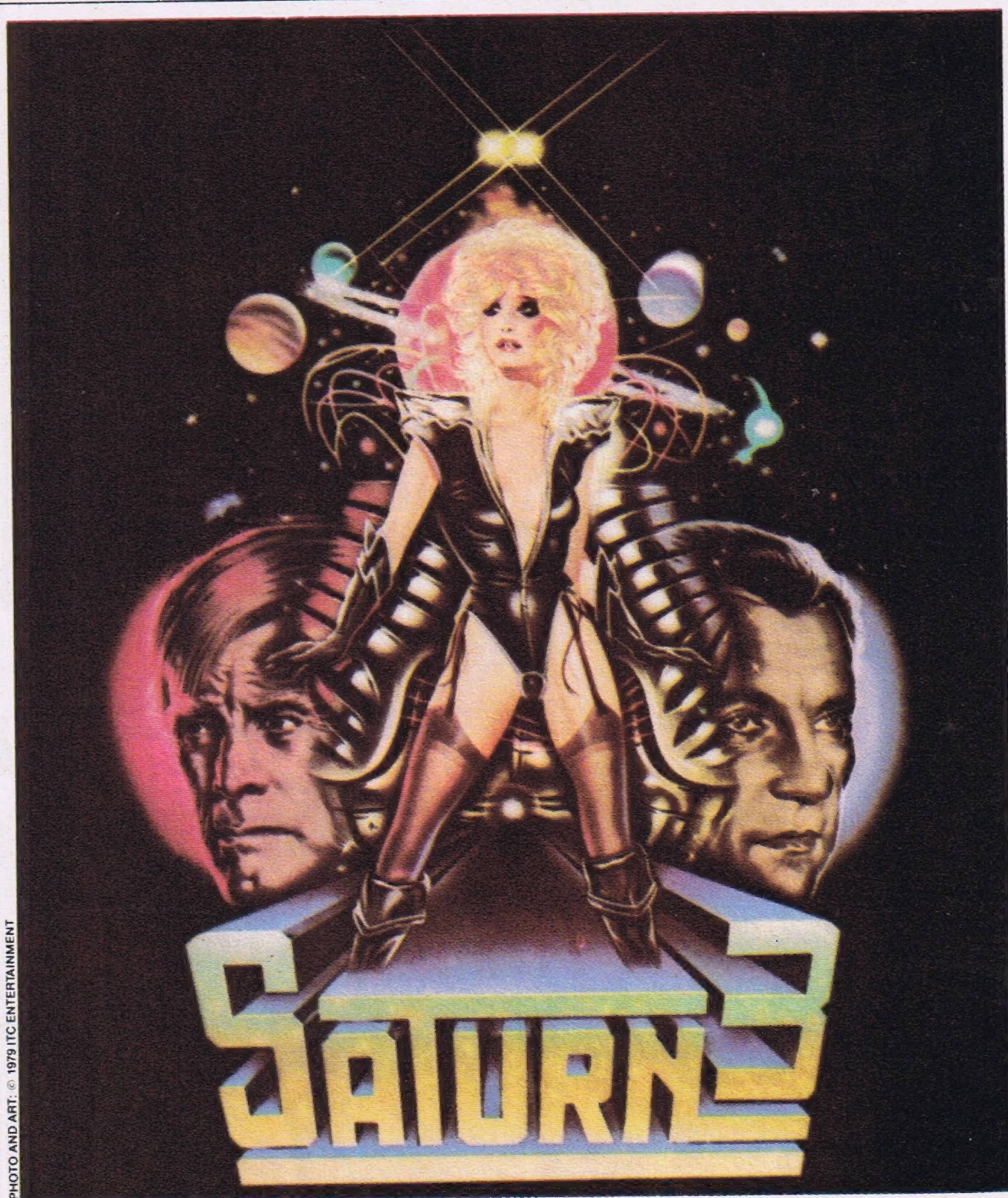
'SATURN 3' WRAPS

Deep beneath the surface of Titan—Saturn's largest moon—is Saturn 3, a research station where food chemists Adam (Kirk Douglas) and Alexis (Farrah Fawcett) hope to develop a hydroponics system that will solve the nutrition problems of Earth's hungry billions. In the course of their work, Adam and Alex have become lovers and now they find their remote outpost to be a haven, far from the decadence that dominates their home planet in the 21st century. But the couple's domestic tranquility is short-lived—their station is visited by James (Harvey Keitel) and his robot, Hector, who seem at first anxious to help the two lovers. But it soon becomes apparent that neither James nor Hector are as friendly as they first appear.

Scripted by novelist Martin Amis and based on an original story by the recently deceased John Barry, *Saturn 3* was produced and directed by Stanley Donen, best-known for such Earthbound films as *Singin' in the Rain*, *Bedazzled* and *Movie, Movie*. "It's science fiction," says Donen, "but not 'comic strip' SF. Not that I'd denigrate comic strips—*Star Wars* is one of my favorite movies. It's something of a Frankenstein story, and meant to frighten audiences in a very unusual way."

Though principal photography was recently completed at Shepperton Studios, special-effects work is still underway. ☆

PHOTO AND ART: © 1979 ITC ENTERTAINMENT



Harvey Keitel (in black), flanked by Douglas and Fawcett. ITC hopes to release the space epic by Christmas or in spring of 1980.



No. 1 — Premiere Issue

Interview: Fred Pohl.
The Man From Planet X.
Tomorrow: Isaac Asimov.



No. 2 —

The Truth Behind Cosmos 954.
Interview: Arthur C. Clarke.
Tomorrow: Norman Spinrad.



No. 3 —

Quasars, Pulsars & Black Holes.
The SF Films of Jules Verne.
Tomorrow: Fred Pohl.



No. 4 —

Interview: Alvin Toffler.
History of the SF Pulp.
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Earthport: Space Station.
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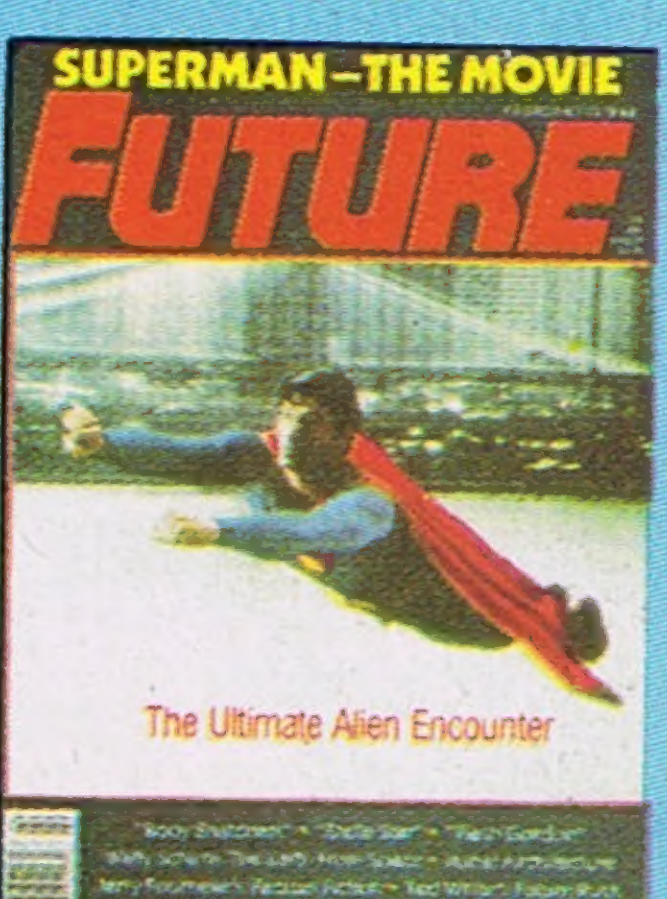
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O'Neill's Mass-Driver.
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Aliens: Hollywoods & NASA's
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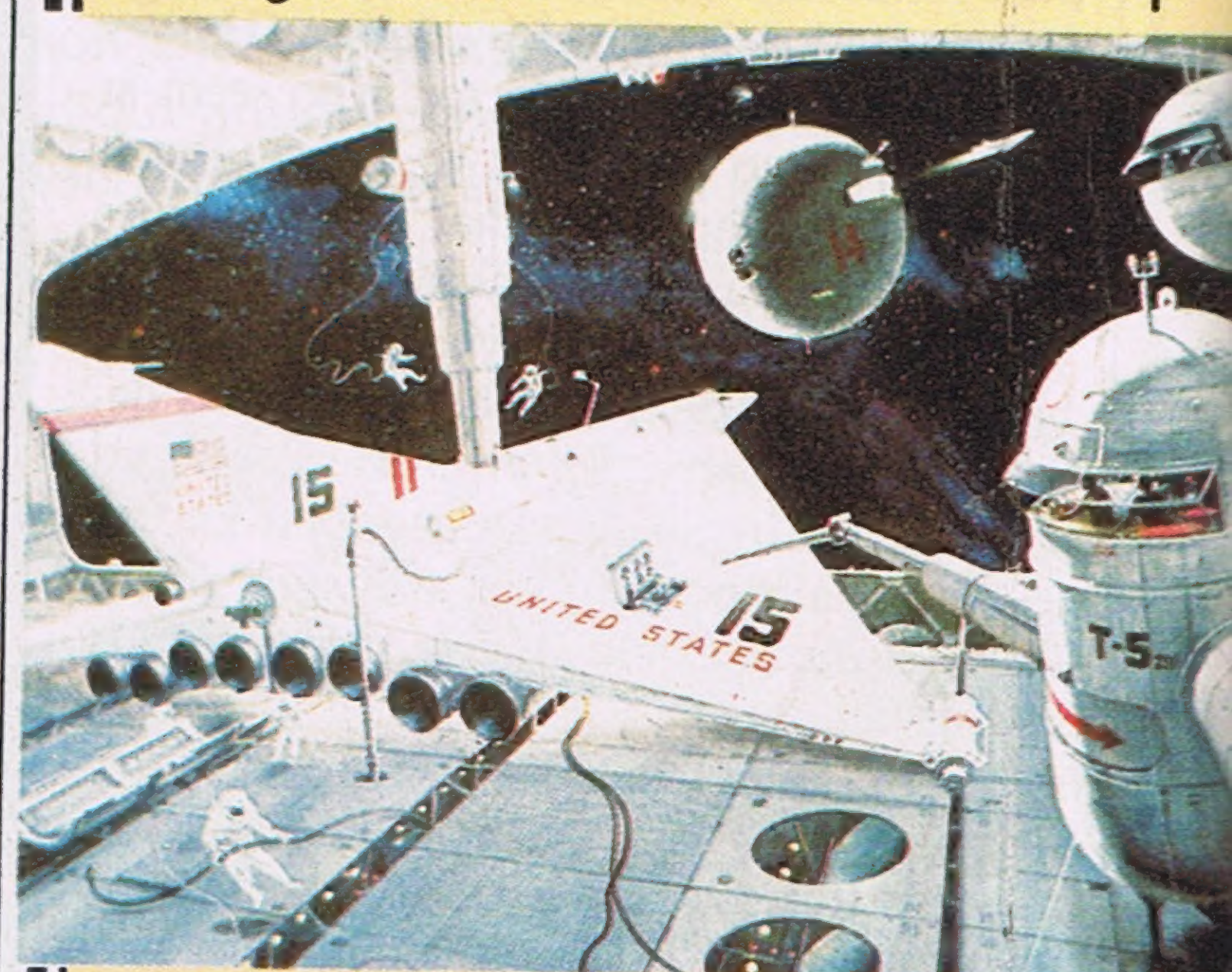
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The Club features exclusive, limited-edition space art painted by the masters of the field: Bob McCall, Vincent DiFate, Ron Miller, Adolf Schaller, John Berkey, Ludek Pesek, Don Davis, plus one mystery artist prominent in the space art field. Virtually the Hall of Fame in space art, this incredible group represents a staggering collection of artistic techniques and scientific imagination. Each print was specially commissioned by STARLOG/FUTURE LIFE and produced on high-quality, textured paper, measuring approximately 18" x 24" in size, ready for framing!

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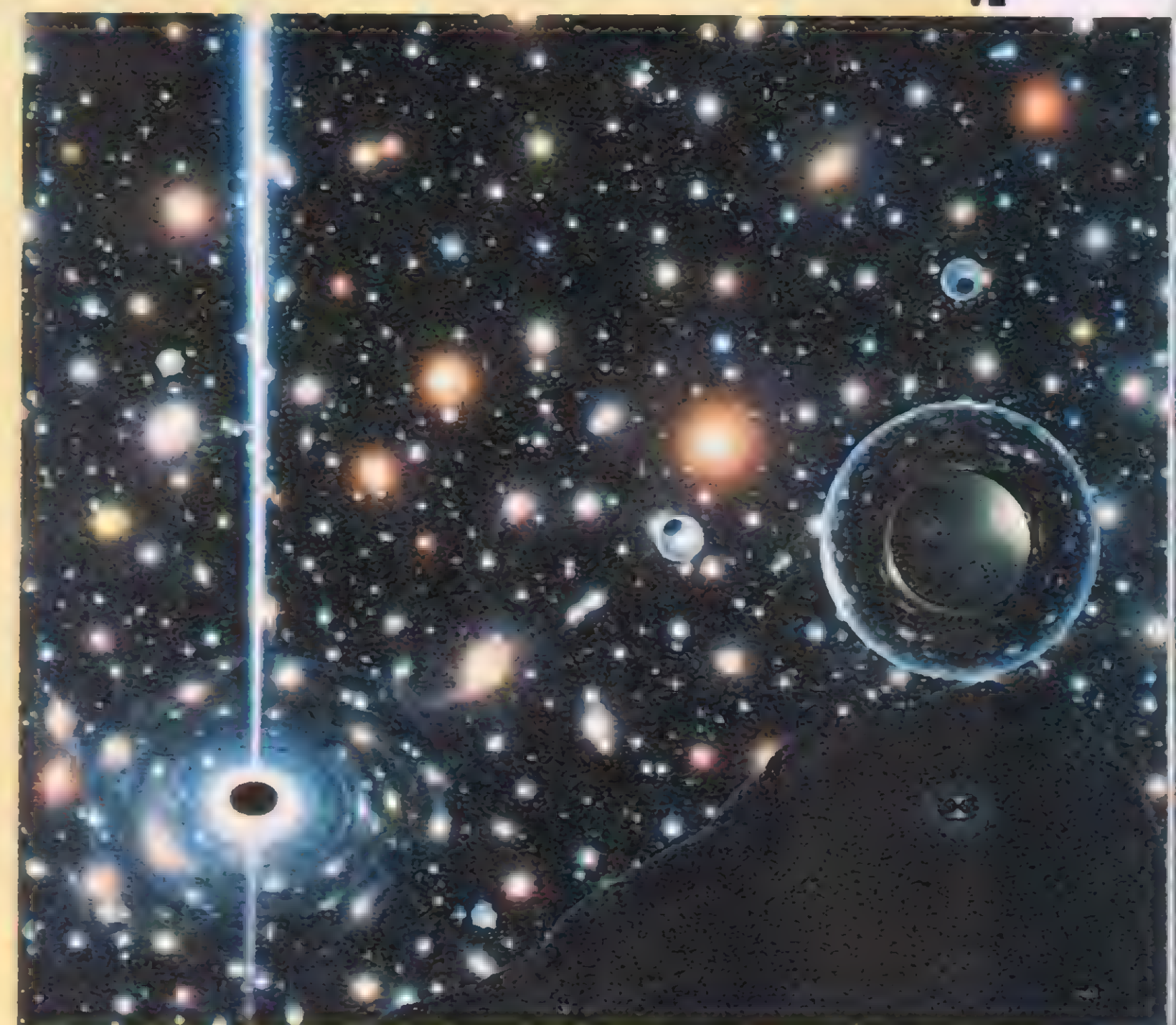


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- #1. "Space Station 2000"
by Bob McCall
- #2. "Exploring Titan"
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- #3. "The Dream Fulfilled"
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HEAVY METAL GOES HOLLYWOOD

Is there a future for full-length animated fantasy films in the wake of *The Lord of the Rings* and *Watership Down*? There will be if *Heavy Metal* magazine has its way. Following in the footsteps of its sister publication, *National Lampoon*, and its unprecedented success with *Animal House*, the illustrated science-fiction and fantasy monthly is preparing its own motion picture for distribution by a major studio. Titled *Heavy Metal*, the movie will adapt six of the most acclaimed stories previously published in the magazine into a feature-length animated anthology. Among the stories will be "Arzach" by Jean "Moebius" Giraud, "So Beautiful and So Dangerous" by Angus McKie, "Tales of the Arabian Nights" by Richard Corben, and possibly "Long Tomorrow" by Moebius and *Alien* screenwriter Dan O'Bannon. The script has been written by veteran SF author Harry Harrison, whose previous film experience includes his novel *Make Room! Make Room!* turned into *Soylent Green*.

To be directed in London by famed animator John Hallas, whose best-known feature is 1954's *Animal Farm*, *Heavy Metal* will reportedly utilize the talents of approximately 80 animators and background and



Preliminary art for the animated version of Corben's *Arabian Nights*.

layout artists gathered from England, Italy, Spain and Germany. While the original artists won't be completely involved in the adaptation of their stories, most of them have indicated their willingness to participate in the production to some extent. Moebius has agreed to draw backgrounds and character development to guide the animators in their interpretation, and McKie is painting 150 backgrounds as well as drawing basic studies

of the characters and spaceships; he has also worked on the storyboards. Corben, however, is said to have no direct interest in the picture and has simply sold his rights to the material back to the magazine.

According to associate producer Michael Gross (who designed *Heavy Metal*'s recently published *The Book of Alien*), animated adaptations of innovative SF and fantasy stories aren't the only ingredients making this project unique. "We're also asking six separate rock bands to compose original scores for six different segments," Gross reveals. "They'll be given a script, storyboards and timing, and will write and perform the music for each individual episode. The only act we've approached that's agreed is The Cars. We haven't gone any further with that yet because it's a little too early and we're still making decisions about the material."

One of those decisions is whether to treat the stories as candidly on screen as they are presented in the pages of the magazine. According to Gross, "The movie will have a lot of explicit sex and nudity and a lot of violence, so it will certainly be rated R. We won't do anything that will get us an X, though, because that would be the kiss of death. On the other hand, we can't settle for a PG either, because that wouldn't be faithful to the spirit of the magazine." ☆

"ALIEN" MINATURE DEMOLISHED



The starrider, photographed shortly before it was torched by vandals.

The Los Angeles opening of *Alien* was marked by misfortune when a miniature version of the film's "starpilot" was destroyed by fire.

The \$200,000 prop—which was over 3/4 scale—had been used in certain sequences of the film and was to have been donated to a

California museum after the opening. It was set ablaze by vandals just hours after being placed on display in the forecourt of Hollywood's Egyptian Theater. Additional objects on display in the theater lobby, including a transport vehicle seen in the film, were unharmed. ☆

HOT PLASTIC

What's a foot and a half tall and ugly as sin, with a prehensile tail and push-button operated jaws? It's Kenner Toys' *Alien*, licensed for manufacture from 20th Century-Fox—just in time for the Christmas season. Be the first on your block... Coming soon to your local toy store. ☆



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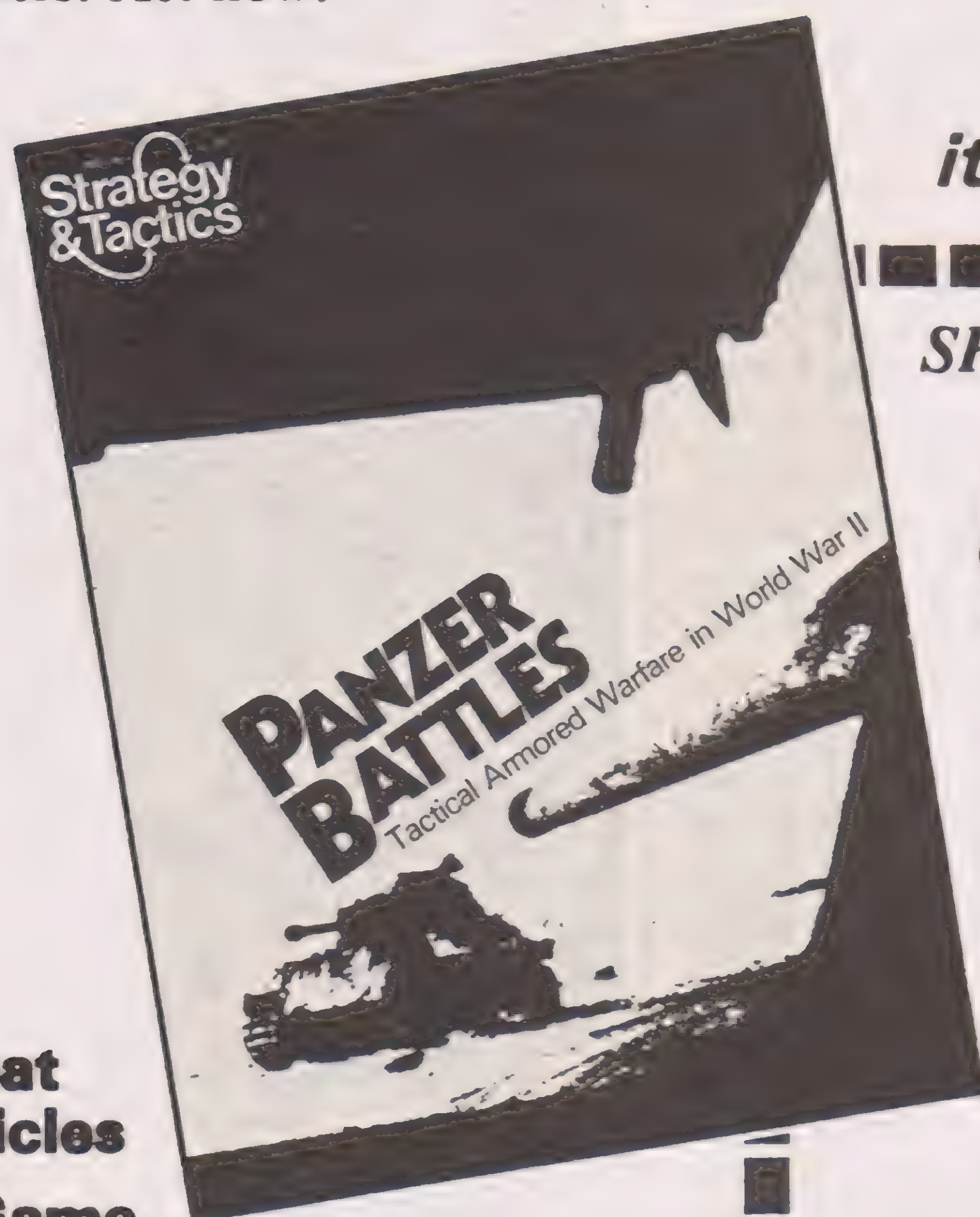


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"EMPIRE" PROGRESS

A Hollywood trade newspaper recently reported that music for the new *Star Wars* film, *The Empire Strikes Back*, might introduce a newcomer to epic scoring: Mick Jagger. The item stated that Jagger had been asked to compose the score. "No," laughs a spokesman at Lucasfilms, Ltd., "we have no idea where that idea originated. John Williams will be scoring the film; the announcement is about to appear in the trades." Like previous reports that Jagger would be starring in Disney's *The Black Hole* or in De Laurentiis' *Dune*, the reports were picked up by various magazines and newspapers that did not bother to check the sources. We can only wonder what Jagger's press agents have been smoking.



PHOTO: DAVID HUTCHISON

Proud Papa Hammil (It's a boy!).

Meanwhile... June 25 was a big day for Mark and Marylou Hamill—the birthday of their brand-new son, Nathan Elias, who is spending his first months on location in England with Dad and Mom. Shooting remains "more or less" on schedule and, if there are no great delays, the world premiere will be in London on May 16 and in the U.S. on May 17, 1980.

Some actual footage from *Empire*, and some still photos taken during the shooting are now visible in a 90-seconds trailer being shown with the current release of *Star Wars*. As an added enticement, a booklet of coupons given to ticket buyers during the month of August allows partial refunds on the purchase of the new line of Kenner's *Star Wars* toys.

SOVIETS TURN RED OVER TV'S "GALACTICA"

In an extraordinary and perhaps unprecedented move, the Soviet Union has singled out specific American science-fiction TV shows as fostering a "Cold War frenzy," according to the July 9 issue of the *New York Post*.

The article states that, according to Soviet state press reporter Melor Sturua, such shows as *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Battlestar Galactica* and *Buck Rogers* are responsible for fostering anti-Soviet sentiment in the United States.

As U.S. correspondent for *Izvestia* (the official Soviet press), Sturua attended the *Sen-surround* version of the *Battlestar Galactica* theatrical release in Washington, D.C. According to his published account, "The crafty Kailons [sic], similar to the 'crafty Soviets,' propose to the president of the galactica union something like space detente." He concluded, according to the newspaper account, that *Galactica* is filled with "anti-Soviet symbolism dressed in a transparent tunic of science fiction." Obviously, U.S. video critics are not alone in attacking the scripts used in this latest TV-SF extravaganza.

☆ A member of the People's Army?



PHOTO: 1978 UNIVERSAL

GLEN LARSON: GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

The good news first: Isaac Asimov has been approached to write the script for the *Battlestar Galactica* telefilm, planned for broadcast sometime during the coming television season. As STARLOG goes to press, Dr. Asimov reports that he has completed an initial treatment and is now waiting for approval from Larson, Universal and ABC before going ahead with the script. Of course, plot details remain secret, but rumor has it that the tale will concern the arrival of a certain rag tag fleet at a certain shining planet.

Now for the bad news: NBC has scheduled Larson's *Buck Rogers* at 9 p.m. Thursdays—opposite *Laverne and Shirley* on ABC and *The Waltons* on CBS. Prominent TV analyst Herb Jacobs, president of TelCom Associates, comments: "This show is a mistake made to order after the failure of *Battlestar Galactica*. It might squeeze a few kids away from *Laverne and Shirley*, but not enough to keep it in prime time. People forget that even the great *Star Trek* failed in prime time."

The *Buck* show will premiere on September 20 with the first television showing of the motion picture *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*—originally planned for an NBC showing some years ago. The following Thursday will feature a brand-new two-hour telefilm continuing *Buck's* adventures, now being written by Aubrey Solomon and Steve Greenburg. A pre-emption (for the World Series) is expected in the third week, after



PHOTO: 1979 UNIVERSAL

Buck: Ready to ambush *Laverne and Shirley*.

which *Buck* will appear in a regular one-hour format. The initial one-hour episodes will be the first of two parts in yet another two-hour script, this one by Alan Brennert.

☆

COMICS INVASION CONTINUES

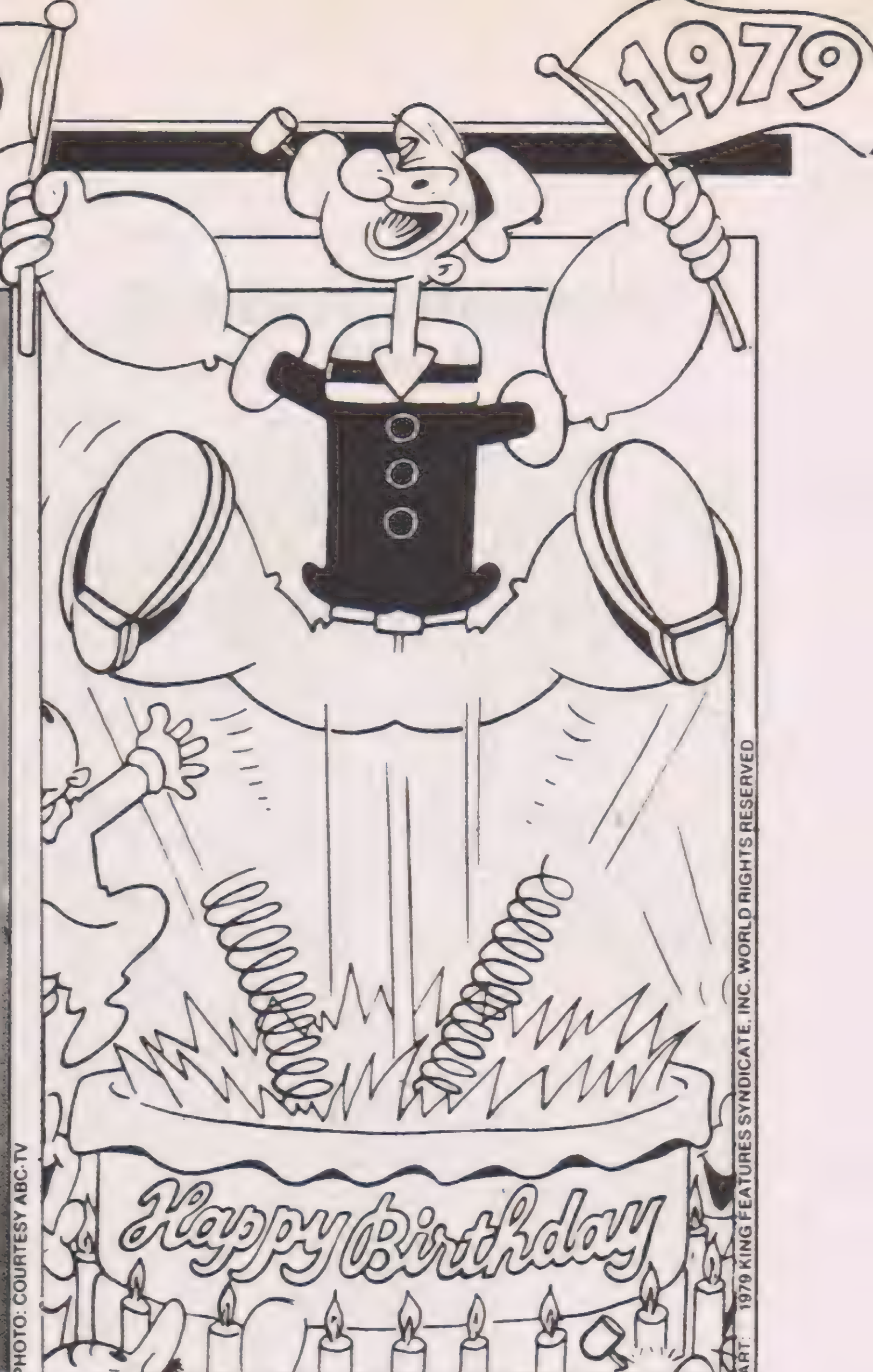
You gasped at *The Incredible Hulk*! You thrilled to the exploits of *Wonder Woman*! You marveled at the feats of *Superman*! Now prepare for the most ambitious transition from comics to film ever attempted... *Alley Oop*!

Yes, the time-traveling caveman will soon be on theater screens across the country, thanks to Frank Price, president of Columbia Pictures, who also happens to be a life-long fan of Oop, Umpa (that's his mate) and the other residents of the Land of Moo. Originated in 1933 by Vincent T. Hamlin, the strip has been written and drawn by Hamlin's former assistant, Dave Graue, since 1971. There is speculation that John (Saturday Night Live) Belushi will star.

While details are still being worked out on the filming of *Oop*, a number of other comics-into-film projects are showing signs of progress in the wake of the *Superman* success. *Flash Gordon* began filming on August 6, with Max Von Sydow, star of Disney's *The Black Hole* and innumerable Ingmar Bergman yawners, as Ming the Merciless. Frank Van Der Veer has been signed to direct the special effects. That film's producer, Dino De Laurentiis, has become involved in another long-awaited fantasy film project—*Conan*, the film version of Robert E. Howard's swashbuckling barbarian, recently popularized through his adventures in Marvel Comics. Edward (Badlands) Pressman is producer, and comics writer Roy Thomas will serve as



On the occasion of Popeye's fiftieth year in the comic biz, Robin Williams has been cast as the super-sailor in a major film production.



story consultant. Ron Cobb, who worked on *Dark Star*, *Star Wars* and *Alien*, is currently turning out preproduction art based on a script by Oliver Stone, author of *Midnight Express*. Associate producer Ed Summer states that no director has been signed as yet, but it seems that John Milius, director of *Big Wednesday*, is a likely choice. *Popeye*, originally announced to star Dustin Hoffman and Lily Tomlin, will soon start shooting under the direction of Robert Altman, with

Robin "Mork" Williams as Elsie Segar's super-powered sailor and Shelley Duvall as Olive Oyle.

Also in the works: Columbia Picture's film version of Broadway's *Annie* (based on the famous "Little Orphan"), a big-budget Tarzan from Warner, to be titled *Greystoke*, and live-action theatrical films based on Mandrake the Magician and America's typical teenager, Archie—the last will be a musical (remember *Sugar, Sugar*?).

FOUND—ONE 35-FOOT ROCKETSHIP!

STARLOG readers will recall the recent report in "Log Entries" concerning Dr. Ward Dean and his search for the *Space Patrol* rocketship won by Ricky Walker of Washington, Illinois, in 1954 (STARLOG #24). No more than a week after that issue reached the newsstands, Starloggers Larry Maeger of Quincie, Illinois, and Brad Hatton of Hannibal, called the STARLOG offices to report that the ship was still in Walker's home state, parked in a used-car lot in Quincie.

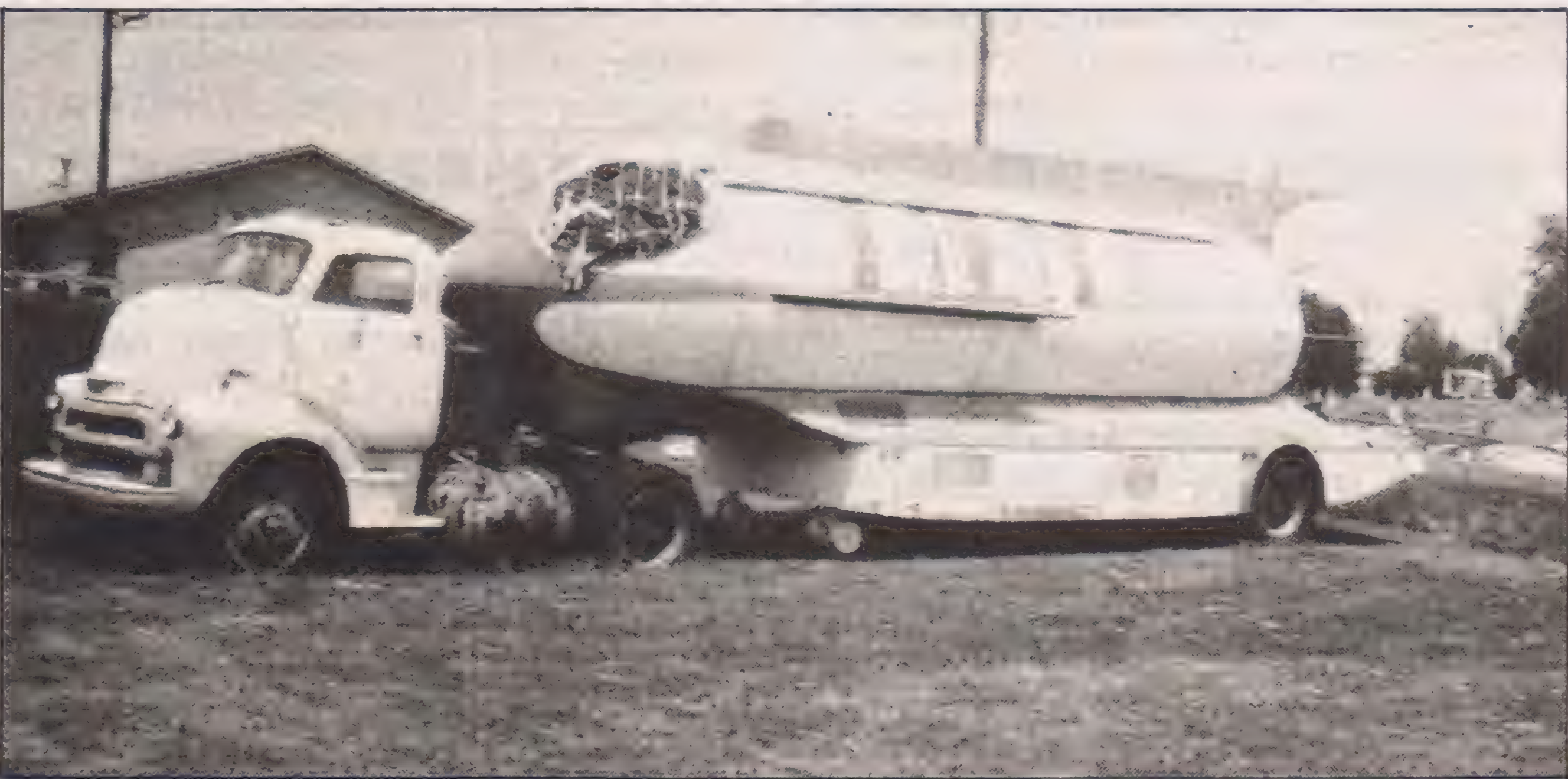
The current owner is Harry Nolin, a Quincie resident who outfitted the ship as a traveling NASA space museum some years ago, which he operated until his recent retirement for health reasons.

Dr. Dean is still quite interested in purchasing the ship, and is now planning a trip from his San Francisco home to examine the ship and discuss terms of such a sale.

In the course of the search, another Starlogger reported locating *another* rocketship of similar size and design, which is also

in Illinois. Printed on the sides of this ship are the words "Rocky Jones, Space Ranger" and "Silva Cup Bread." Illinois loggers with more details and photos are hereby invited to report. ☆

Right: The *Space Patrol* ship as it appeared 25 years ago. Below: Dr. Dean's dream ship as it appears today.



"METEOR" STRIKES BACK

The all-star, multi-million-dollar *Meteor*, scheduled originally for release in October, is reportedly again in trouble, even though all live-action footage has been shot and editing is almost complete. The difficulties lie, largely, in the special-effects department(s). Early in 1979, all the optical effects—which include an avalanche burying an Alpine village and thousands of skiers, the inundation of Hong Kong, celestial meteor showers, outer-space footage of atomic missiles blowing up an asteroid, and the destruction of Manhattan Island—were

discarded. "They just weren't good enough," director Ronald Neame tells STARLOG. The waste has been reported at \$750,000.

A new special-effects team, headed by Bill Cruse, was hired to start over—which they did. Now, as we go to press, the production company is reportedly broke and unable to pay for the new effects. There are rumors that Cruse, too, has been "fired." In an effort to pump in funds, a new independent production company has been formed to buy the film from American International Pictures and there are hopes that re-financing will solve the problems so that the film can be completed and released. "It seems certain, though," says one of the involved parties, "that the release will be delayed—at least." ☆



Bo Brundin loses his balance on the *Meteor* set.

FANGORIA FEATURES MUTANT MENACE

Look out! FANGORIA #2 should be at your local newsstand right now, graced with a majestic color cover photo of the Bear of the Year. It's not Fozzie or Smokey—it's Burman Studios' monstrous mutant created for the Paramount Pictures blockbuster *Prophecy*. Inside you'll find stories on the making of *Prophecy* and *Phantasm*, a pictorial rogues'

gallery of *Dr. Who*'s greatest villains, exclusive interviews with fantasy masters Richard Matheson and Robert Bloch, the fantastic art of Carl Lundgren, and much more—including a full-color pull-out poster of Tom Baker as *Dr. Who*!

The FANGORIA excitement has started already—so rush to your newsstand.

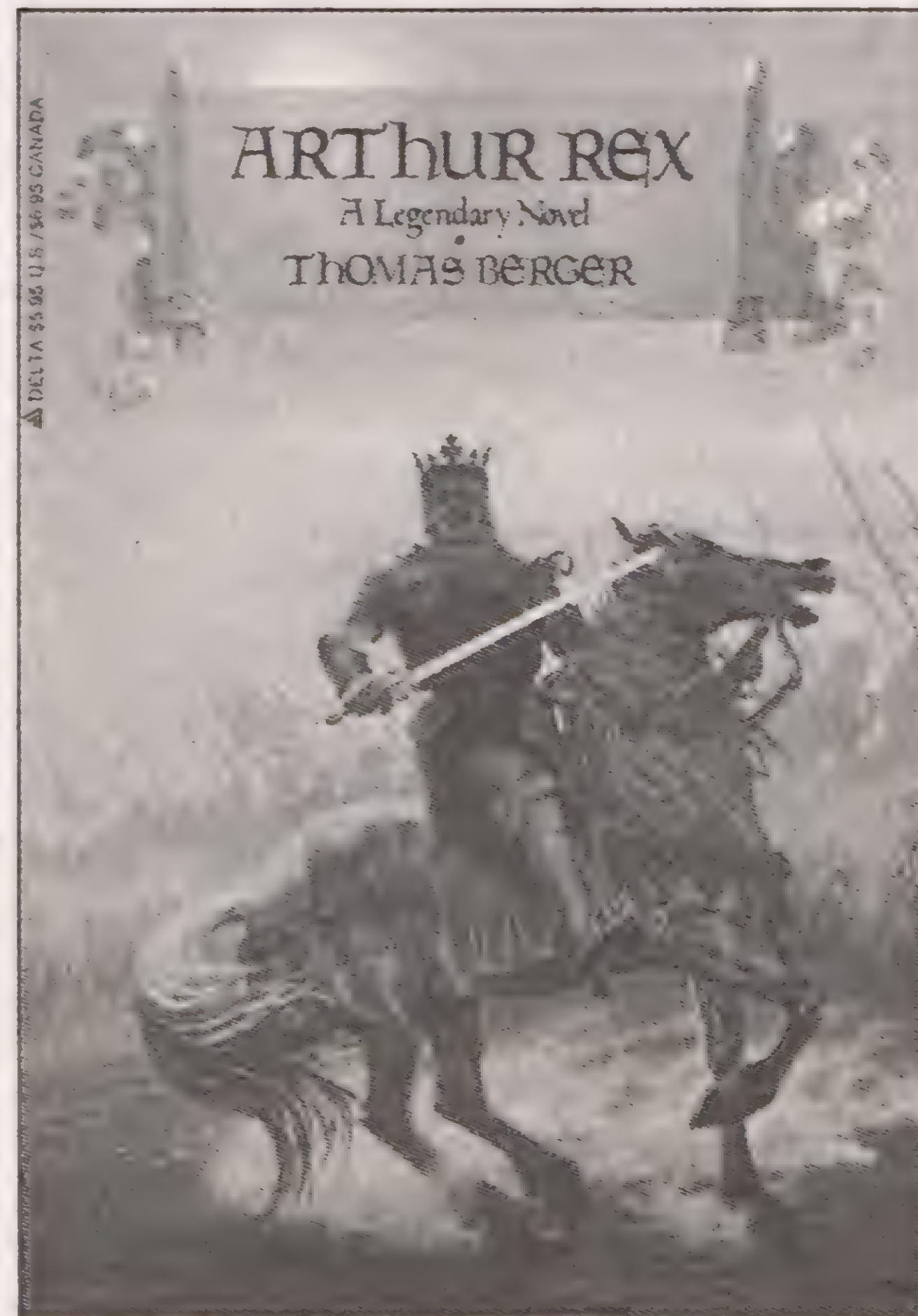
FUTURE LIFE OFFERS "DUNE," MARS & "TREK"

Hugo Award-winning science-fiction author Frank Herbert reveals details of the upcoming \$40-million-film version of his classic novel *Dune* in FUTURE LIFE #14, on sale September 18. Writer Leonard David uncovers a scientific underground that insists it's possible for humans to make it to Mars by 1988. The producers of TV's upcoming mini-series, *The Martian Chronicles*, take FUTURE LIFE readers on the exotic *Chronicles* set for an in-depth look at the making of a video

classic. Also included in issue #14: exclusive *Star Trek*—*The Motion Picture* full-color pre-production art; A.E. van Vogt on the future on war; Russian space art by Andrei Sokolov; a preview of the fall TV season's most-talked-about SF experiment; Nicholas Meyer expounds on *Time After Time*'s futuristic philosophy; an exclusive interview with Laserium's young inventor, spotlighting the laser experiment of the future; book reviews; Databank news, plus more! ☆

REPORT FROM HOLLYWOODLAND

Knighthood will again be in flower in the early 1980s—at least on the screen. Last month's STARLOG announced Ridley Scott's plans to film *The Knight*, a tale of mysticism and heroism that will portray a returning Crusader as "the equivalent of the American Cowboy" according to the director of *Alien*. This is now followed by Warner Brothers' announcement of *Merlin and the Knights of King Arthur*, to be directed by John (Zardoz) Boorman. The budget will be in the \$10-million range, and lots of action and SFX are planned. Boorman is now looking for the right Merlin—the script calls for a 40s-ish gent with a noble look. Another Arthurian project is *Arthur Rex*, based on the novel by Thomas Berger, being prepared as a telefilm by Martin Poll (producer of *The Lion in Winter*). In a related development, George (Dawn of the Dead) Romero says his next will be *Knights*, about a motorcycle gang that stages bloody medieval jousts on their two-wheelers. Other Romero plans include *Shoo-Be-Doo-Be Moon*, a science-fiction comedy, and the inevitable *Day of the Dead*. . . NBC has been putting the brakes on their mini-series plans for this fall. In addition to *Atlas Shrugged*, previously announced programs like *Brave New World* and the Japanese swashbuckler *Shogun* are missing from their announced schedule. . . A musical number that was edited from the initial release of *Rocky Horror Picture Show* will soon be replaced in the film—making all current bootleg prints of the Kult Klassik incomplete. . . Cute kid actor Ricky Schroder and veteran William Holden have signed to make an Australian film to be called *The Earthling*. ☆



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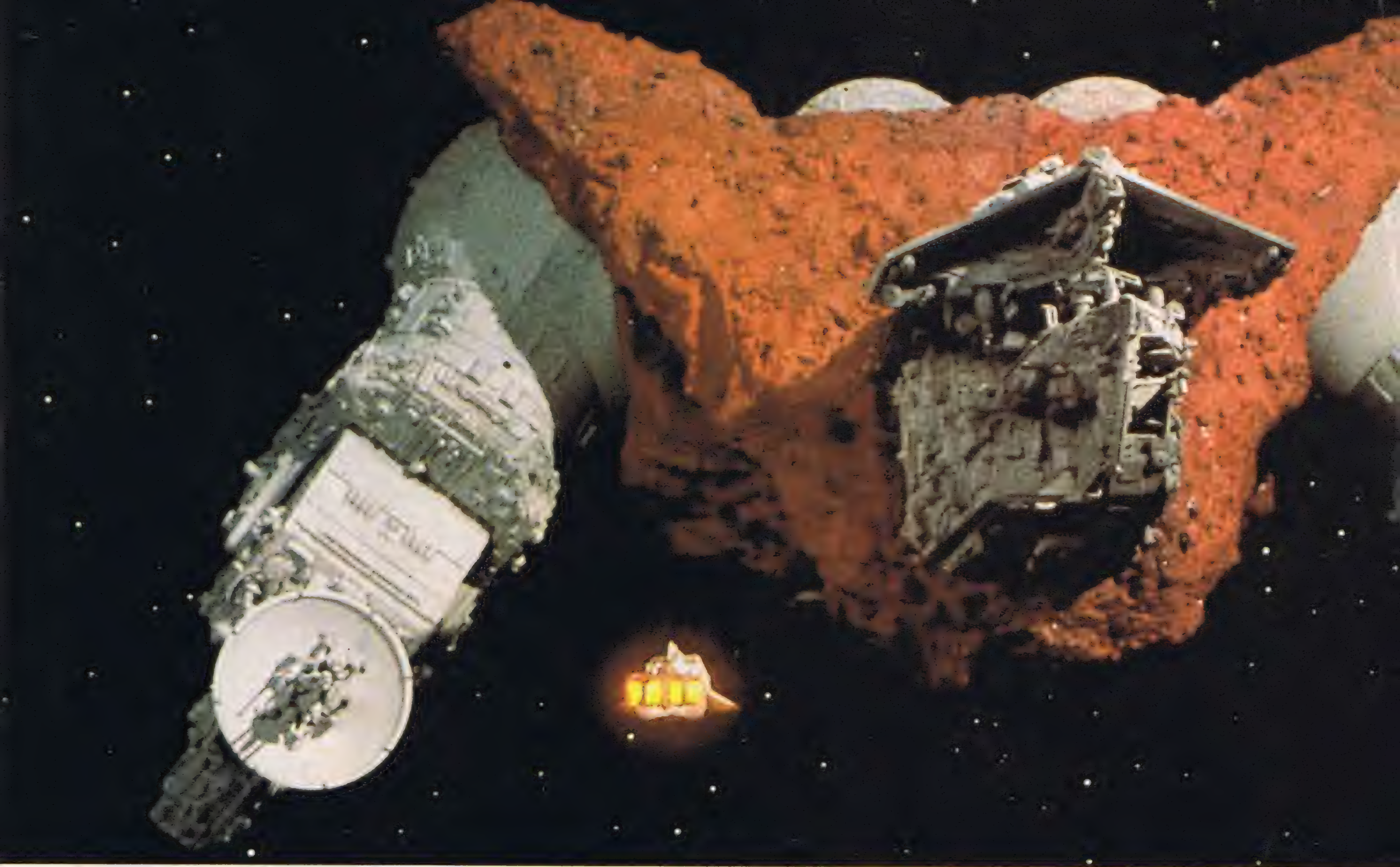
DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

STARLOG's Space Art Advisor, Ron Miller (author of *SPACE ART*), has contributed a brief biographical sketch of each artist in addition to the artist's own description of the astronomical scene depicted.

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Filmation's Adventures in Outer Space

Finally completed and assigned a tentative air date, Filmation's full-length *Flash Gordon* has become the first prime-time animated TV movie-pilot to be picked up, in an unusual two-year contract, for a half-hour Saturday morning series. The movie airs Friday night, September 7, on NBC; and the first episode is to be shown the very next morning—at 10:30 a.m.—on the same network.

Meanwhile, the pilot will live on, in Europe, as a theatrical motion picture—through a financial and distribution arrangement with Dino De Laurentiis, who shares rights to the original *Flash* with Filmation and is now in preproduction for his own live-action film version.

Logically, Filmation might have decided to chop their two-hour feature into four parts—and have ready-made Saturday episodes for a month. But they have gone a more complex route. Some of the movie material will, indeed, show up on Saturday mornings, but there will be scenes added, and scenes taken away, so that a slightly different story is told

and it won't be until episode #8 that all-new material is required.

While the *Flash Gordon* film has been made in what is called *limited animation*—due to time and budget restrictions common to television—there are some scenes of extraordinary realism and extravagant animation. These are due, largely, to technological advances at Filmation.

Three-dimensional clay models were made of the principle characters—so three-dimensional views of them could be accomplished by any of the numerous animators. Rotoscoping—tracing outlines from live-action footage onto animation cells—has been used in key scenes throughout, lending unusual subtlety to certain human movements. Disney, and other studios involved in so-called *full animation*, test animation sequences in pencil prior to committing them to cells and paint; at this test stage, corrections in movement, expression, etc. are made. Typically, this stage has not been available to Filmation and others in TV animation. It's too time consuming. But Filmation has a new

videotape system that permits instant replay of pencil tests, and this system was used extensively on *Flash Gordon*.

Possibly the most innovative system, though, is the one that was used for animating spaceships. A motion-control camera set-up (like the one used in *Star Wars* and most films since) was used to photograph fully constructed miniatures of the ships and aircraft. These models were white with black grid lines, and were photographed against a black background. Like the X-wings and TIE fighters in *Star Wars*, the *Flash Gordon* ships zoom toward and away from the camera, bank, roll, turn, etc.—perform wild actions that would be all but impossible to animate from scratch.

An unexpected plus arose from that spaceship system: It was discovered that with the use of the motion-control camera, long dollies and zooms could be added to portions of painted scenes. In one outstanding sequence, Earth grows menacingly large in the sky beyond the towers of Ming's city on Mongo, as the planets rush together on a col-



PHOTO: © 1978 FILMATION

lision course. The planets were cut-out paintings mounted on the motion-control track. This, and other techniques, lend the film a multi-plane look, though no multi-plane equipment was used.

New Adventures for Jason

In Filmation's live-action department, a new version of *Jason of Star Command* is in preparation. Last season, *Jason* showed up as a cliffhanger serial in the middle of the *Tarzan-Super 7* show. As such, it did not even rate its own listing in the TV guides. Those who did stumble upon it were treated to



Left: The dragonship of Dragos, pursued by Jason's *Starfire*. Above: Mighty, in his cloud-top observatory, on the lookout for feline evildoers.

splendid (though low-budget) motion-control work in the outer space scenes. One wildly tentacled alien was fully stop-motion animated and combined with live-action through front-projection techniques. For Saturday morning, this was quite a breakthrough.

For this coming season, *Jason* will have its own half-hour slot on CBS. Twelve new episodes have been ordered by the network. No longer a cliffhanger serial, *Jason* is to be shot as four loosely continued stories of three episodes each. Other changes have also been made.

The budget has increased to the point where, says producer-story editor Arthur Nadel, "it is definitely the most expensive children's show ever." The increased funding will permit use of more model-animated aliens; animators Jim Aupperle and Steve Czerkas say they are working on four. And many more spaceships; "a whole fleet of bad guys," says model shop chief John Grusd, "and a new baseship for the villain." (One of the new enemy ships bears a slight, delightful

resemblance to an old-fashioned pirate ship.)

The villain—this year as last—is Dragos, more powerful and hideous than ever. And, of course, the dashing hero Jason—with his robot sidekicks—is held over from last year. There will be a new female character, Samantha, and a new *Star Command* commander—neither of whom is cast as this is written. Last season's commander was played by James Doohan—Scotty of *Star Trek*—"and it's turning out to be very difficult finding an actor as right for the role as he was," says Arthur Nadel.

Mighty Mouse in Space

Back in Filmation's animation department, there's a new show for CBS that just might attract as many big kids as little ones. Some old comic-book favorites have been resurrected (and streamlined) for an hour show featuring Mighty Mouse, Heckyl and Jeckyl and a familiar-looking duck who this time has fangs: Quackula.

The show has a sense of humor reminiscent of the old *Rocky and Bullwinkle* program, but with decidedly original touches. For instance, the following is from a 16-part series:

"Harry the Heartless, I should have recognized your foul stench!" says helpless Queen Pearl Pureheart as she's taken prisoner. The archvillain takes her to his cat-shaped star-cruiser (which was hiding in a black hole) where he reveals his new superweapon, the Catatomic Catamaton—a giant Japanese-style robot with awesome powers. Mighty Mouse, speaking in a pompous voice a little like Gary Owens', is sitting at his telescope (sampling singing cheeses) and witnesses the kidnapping. To the rescue! Harry the Heartless has, naturally, an ultimate plan: to steal The Doomsday Machine. But when he finally gets it, the machine is in kit form, with miles and miles of unintelligible assembly instructions.

Filmation seems hell-bent on making it difficult to sleep late on Saturdays!

★

The villainous Ming of Mongo, accompanied by his robot henchmen.



ART: © 1979 FILMATION



PHOTOS: © 1979 COLUMBIA PICTURES TELEVISION

'The Martian Chronicles'

Ray Bradbury's Martian classic comes to the home screen, in a new adaptation by television's master fantasist.

By BOB MARTIN

To the ancients, Mars was a symbol of war, but in the late 19th century, Italian astronomer G.V. Schiaparelli discovered the "canals" of Mars and changed its meaning for humanity. Mars became the one chance for life elsewhere in our solar system. Later, that possibility of life inspired three masters of modern literature: H.G. Wells, who saw the Martians as alien conquerors (*War of the Worlds*), Edgar Rice Burroughs, who pictured "Barsoom" as the setting for swashbuckling adventure (the *John Carter of Mars* series) and Ray Bradbury, who saw in Mars a means to reflect all of the strengths and frailties of humankind.

On three consecutive evenings this fall (September 17, 18 and 19), NBC television will present a six-hour mini-series based on Bradbury's classic novel of life on Mars, *The Martian Chronicles*, adapted to the screen by Richard Matheson, a writer long associated with imaginative television (*The Twilight Zone*, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, *Duel*). The *Chronicles* story, rich in the poetic



language and imagery that is Bradbury's trademark, details a vision that is unique to its author—so unique that Matheson is slow to accept credit for the excellence of his *Chronicles* script.

"As I see it," says Matheson, "my job on the adaptation of *The Martian Chronicles* was to follow the original as closely as possible, which I did with few exceptions. I have seen what some people have done to ruin some otherwise marvelous projects, and I was not going to be guilty of that. The sole major change I made was to give it a sense of continuity by taking one of the characters from the third expedition and making him the main character throughout most of the stories."

The character Matheson refers to is Captain Wilder (played by Rock Hudson in the

Above and left: Spender (Bernie Casey) and Wilder (Rock Hudson) explore the deserted ruins of the once-great Martian culture. Spender's identification with the Martians is soon to cause big trouble.

television adaptation), who arrives on Mars with the first successful expedition. In the novel he dies in an attempt to further explore the universe—Matheson's version allows him to live and establish his home in a colony of Mars.

The story itself begins on Earth, with the departure of the first and second expeditions, both of which meet doom at the hands of the Martians (a third expedition, in which the visitors learn that they have landed in a town reserved for the insane of Mars, was deleted from the script). Wilder's mission succeeds, but only by default, as Wilder and his five-man crew discover that the original Martians have been wiped out by chicken pox, spread by the earlier explorers. Some few Martians still survive in the hills, but these are so few in number that the end of the old Martian race

seems certain. It is at this point that the first of the three parts concludes.

The balance of the *Chronicles* details the conflicts of the Martian colonists as they enter their strange new home, still haunted by the ancient artifacts of the noble Martians, with the alien Martian setting producing a sharp outline to the human strengths and weaknesses brought by the colonists to their new home.

Bradbury first wrote the *Chronicles* some 30 years ago, but Matheson does not feel that the intervening years of space exploration will make its story any harder to accept. "As is pointed out early in the script, our Mars probes have only seen a small part of the surface of Mars," comments Matheson. "No one knows what a real expedition will find."

Though some science-fiction purists might

argue the point further, Matheson is quick to add that he is *not* a science-fiction writer. "If I categorize myself—though I prefer not to—it is as a fantasy writer—which covers a much broader field. Bradbury, too, I consider a fantasy writer—just because he set the story on Mars doesn't make it science fiction."

Does he feel that his version has retained the poetry of Bradbury's original?

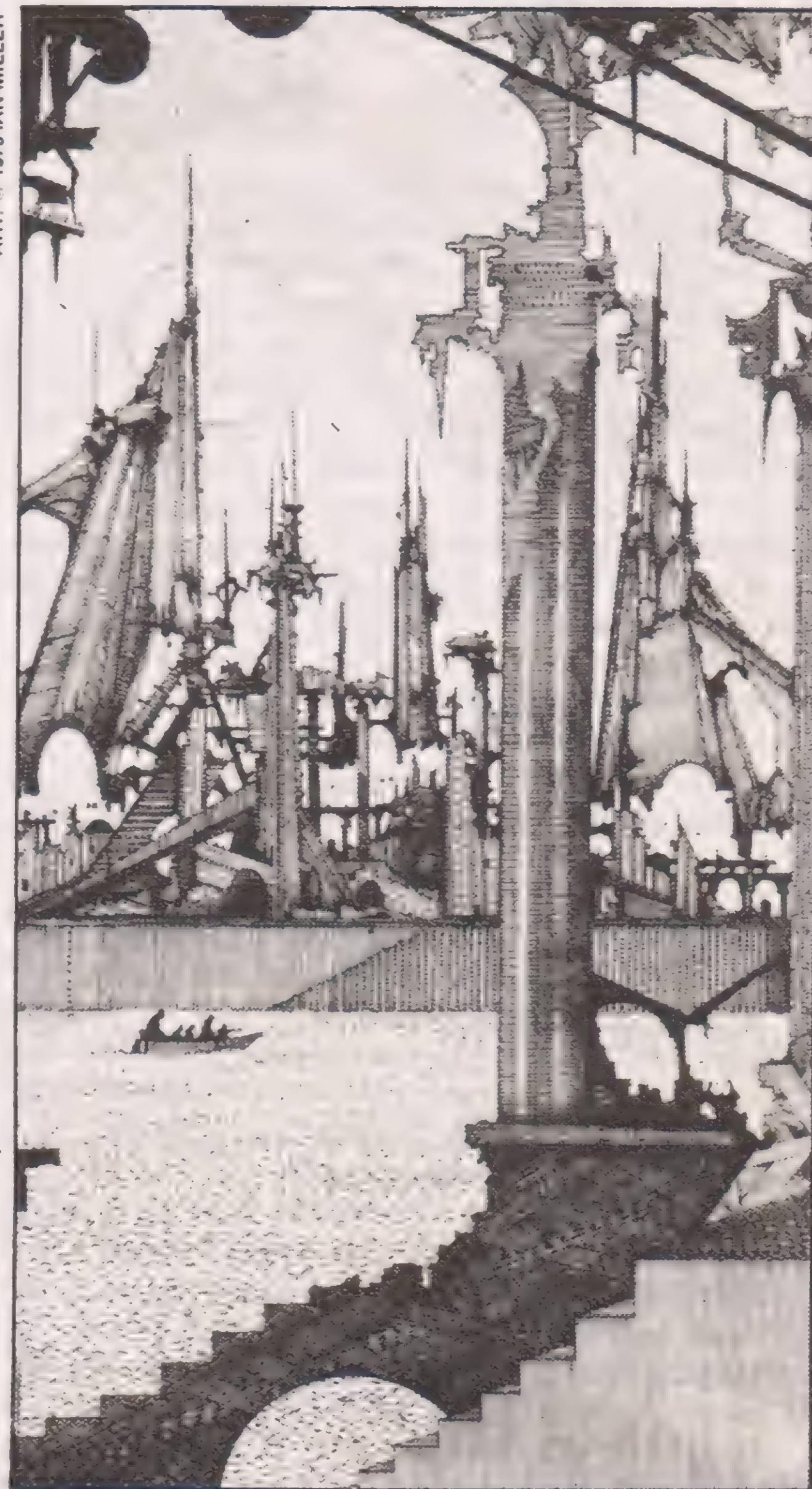
"It can't be approached as poetry," he replies. "You can't translate poetry into the concrete visual terms of TV or film writing. The way in which the filmmakers deal with it will determine whether it will be poetic or not. I deal with it as a straightforward, realistic story."

Matheson is especially pleased that the six-hour format allowed him to gradually develop the Bradbury characters, and to include nearly all the sequences from the book. The only exceptions are the Martian insane asylum episode mentioned above, and Bradbury's updating of Poe's *House of Usher*, detailing the collapse of an automated house on an Earth devastated by nuclear war. Though both of these segments were scripted, the six-hour running time was not long enough to include them.

Otherwise, *The Martian Chronicles* will be the most complete and faithful rendition of an SF classic ever to hit the home screen. And if it proves successful, we can hope that television at large will follow its lead to a new maturity for televised SF. ★



ART: © 1979 IAN MILLER



Left: Spender, claiming to be the last Martian, is hunted by his fellow crewmen. Above: The canaled ruins of a Martian city. These interpretations by Ian Miller are from *The Illustrated Martian Chronicles* (Bantam Books, \$6.95). Reprinted with permission.

Starlog Goes Japanese

STARLOG now has a very special Japanese language edition, chock-full of rare color stills and Japanese SF news. STARLOG, published in a format you've never seen before, features bold Japanese graphics, with fantastic full-color, pull-out posters in every issue. Packaged in a plastic, laminated cover, the Japanese STARLOG is a visual treat for all SF collectors and enthusiasts.



A limited quantity of the Japanese STARLOG, issues No. 1-7, has been imported for U.S. fans. The premiere issue features STAR WARS and includes a double poster featuring Wonder Woman and a full-color spread of 62 SF film posters from the collection of Forrest Ackerman. Issue No. 2 highlights science-fiction television and focuses on STAR TREK, with a starship Enterprise poster and blueprint details. Issue No. 3, the special-effects issue, contains a combination color poster of a planetary landscape SPACE: 1999 Eagle 1 blueprint and SF graphic catalogue spread. No. 4, the Gerry Anderson Supermarionation issue, contains (2) triple pull-out posters filled with Shusei Nagaoka artwork, X-wing Fighter blueprints, Godzilla animations and Thunderbirds Are Go! model poster. No. 5, the Superman cover issue contains a triple, fold-out poster of Superman in flight. The issue features original science-fiction and comic artwork from Japan and other parts of the world. Also included is a preview section on the Japanese version of the Starlog Photoguidebook to SPACE-SHIPS. No. 6, the cover and triple, fold-out poster inside features Wonder Woman in dazzling full-color, but there's much more: 18 page 'Horoscope' section—a Japanese guide to well-known creatures; fantastic SF artwork of Godzilla and space travel; the Japanese history of robots. No. 7, the Star Hawks cover is the introduction to the most Japanese influenced issue, yet. Much of the contents has never before appeared in the U.S. Also included is Forry Ackerman's SF souvenirs double Frank Frazetta fold-out, full-color photo collages and other visual treats.

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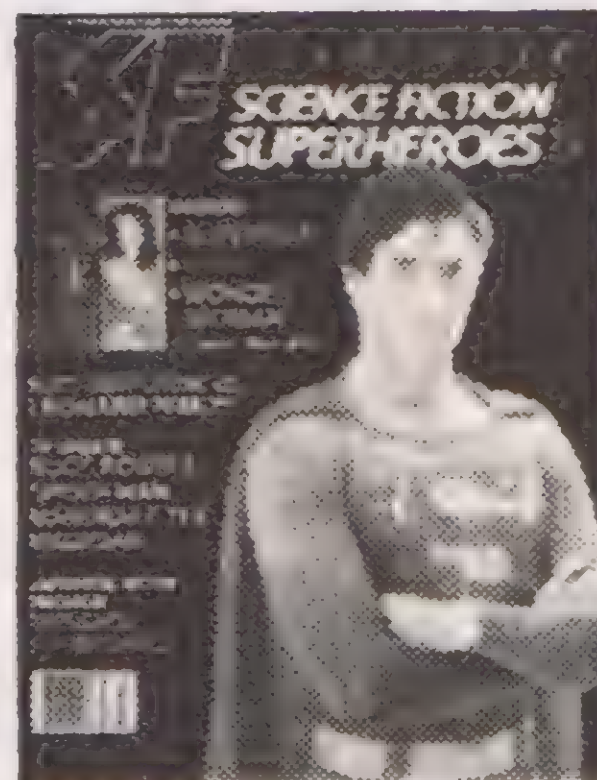
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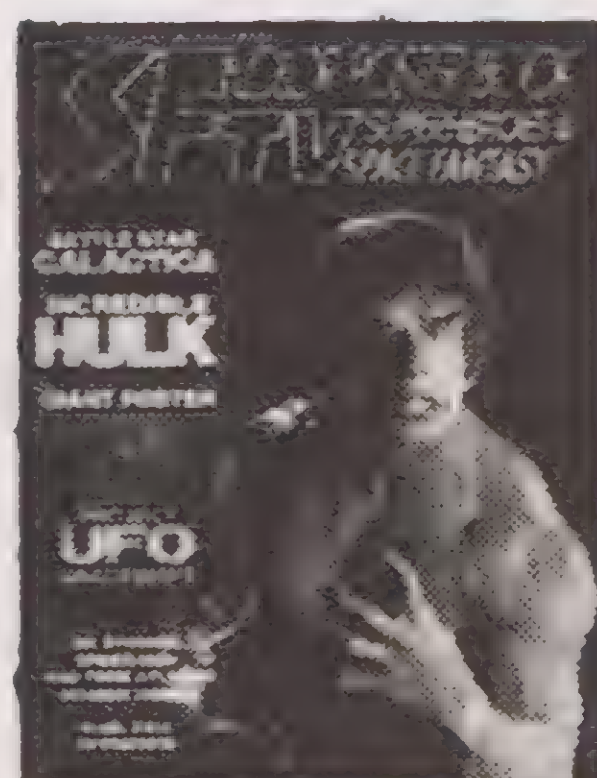
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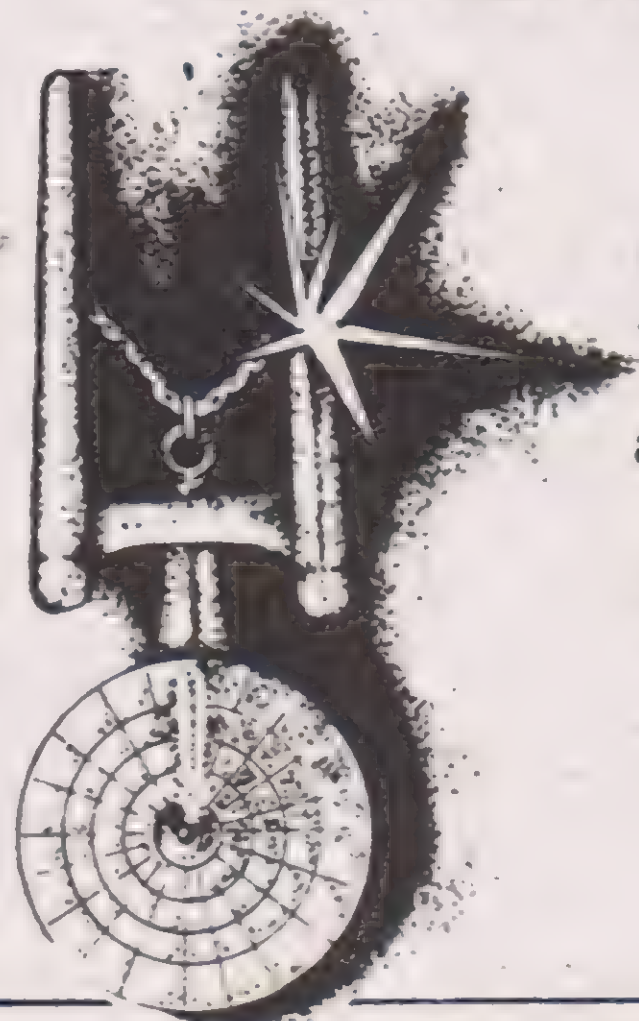
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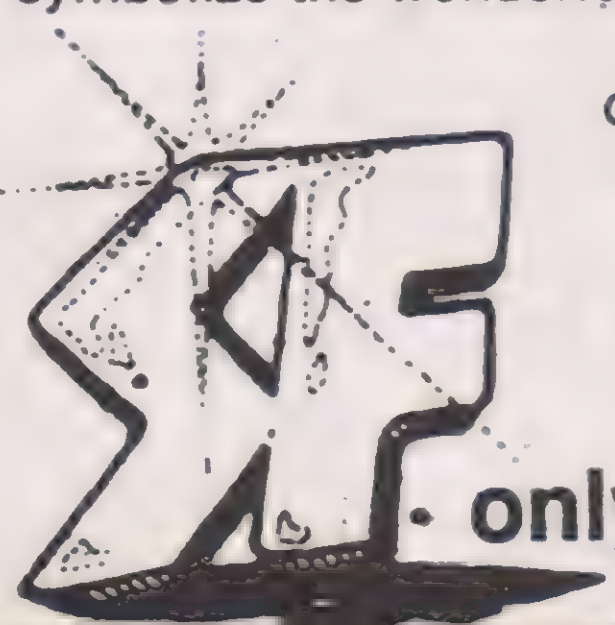
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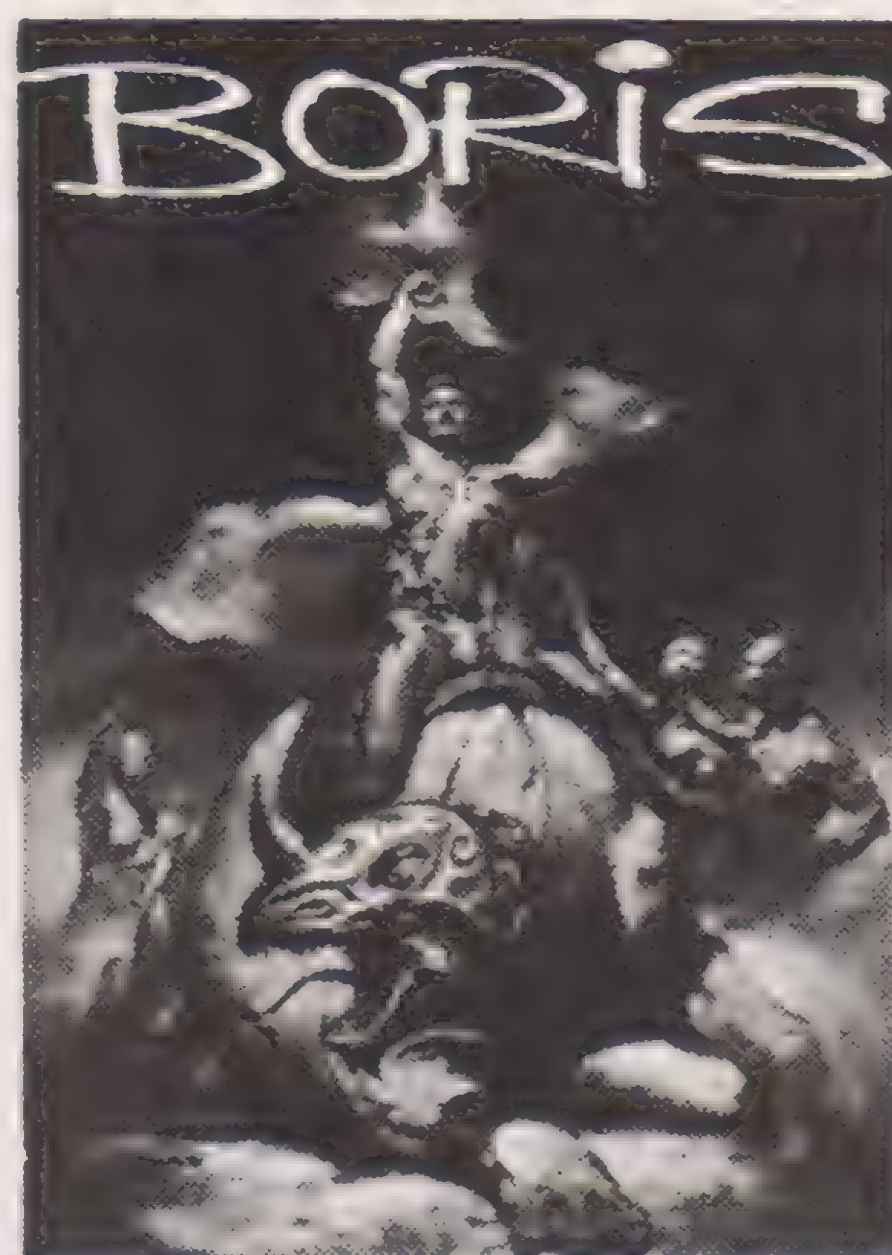
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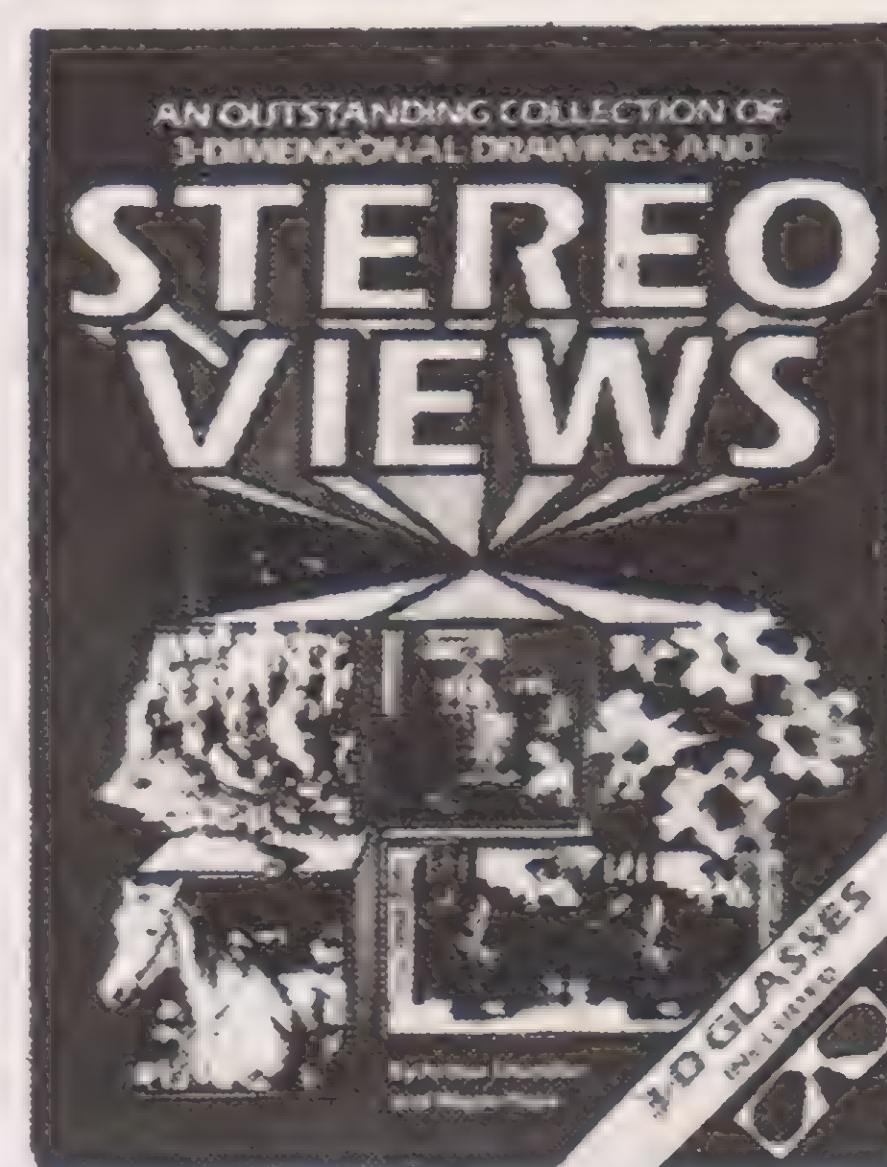
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Port of Call: Solis Lacus

The solar system, as any I.E.I. traveler or otherwise-seasoned spacefarer knows, is a place of spectaculars—crimson volcanoes, golden skies, canyons the size of continents. But even terrestrial vacationers who have seen the Seven Wonders of the World have been known sometimes to covet the more subtle and intimate gratifications of, say, a quiet woodland stream too small to rate a name, or a sylvan glade with no more to offer than the chance to nestle down in the shaded grasses and reflect on the gentle beneficence of nature. If you are of such a mind—if a select, peaceful moment can occasionally move you more than yet another monolithic wonder—then I.E.I.'s latest excursion may have a certain rare, quiet appeal.

Consider Mars. Harsh, near-airless, slashed by fissures and flows on a titanic scale and scarred by the peaks, pocks and pits of its tortuous evolution. And *dry*! Drier than the most parched desert on Earth, even despite a north polar cap rich in water ice (which merely turns directly to vapor in the thin atmosphere, leaving the flowing liquid of mountain streams as an extinct relic of a possible past). The salmon sky of Mars is colored not by its gases, as is the blue sky of Earth, but by sunlight scattered through the omnipresent dust.

But there is...a place. To the casual observer or seeker after topographic splendor, it is undistinguished—another rubble-strewn plain, largely basalt, located about 1,000 kilometers south of the spectacular chain of canyons known as Valles Marineris (see I.E.I., STARLOG #15). But if your sense of Mars is one of unbroken aridity, or if you can empathize with the water-sharing rituals of Heinlein's Martian emigrant, Michael Valentine Smith, (*Stranger in a Strange Land*), pay this place a visit. For the region known to terrestrial astronomers as Solis Lacus may offer the chance, perhaps unique on the planet, to thrust your fingers a few centimeters down into the surface and bring them out...wet.

If you find that a trivial thing, then save your time and money. There are plenty of more obvious eye-poppers elsewhere. But if you truly have a feel for Mars, perhaps together with some knowledge of the Mars that may have been (in an ancient time when flowing water possibly could and did exist on the surface), then this brief excursion may affect you in a deeper, more personal way.

Solis Lacus means Lake of the Sun, so-called because, at 85° longitude and 25° south latitude, it is the closest point on the planet to the Sun when Mars is at the most sunward point in its orbit. As such, it is one of the

warmest spots on Mars, sometimes getting as warm as an energy-conscious Earthling's room temperature—290° K or about 65° Fahrenheit. It is certainly not a lake—the name was originally applied to a dark smudge noted by Earth-based observers who could see no great detail—although the possibility of wetting one's fingers there suggests that the choice was not entirely inappropriate.

The point, in short, is this: much of the Martian surface, many researchers believe, may be underlain by a layer of permafrost—water ice, kept frozen by the low temperatures and locked away from sublimation (direct change from liquid to vapor) by meters or more of the surface material. At Solis Lacus, the permafrost is apparently much closer to the surface (though still sealed off by the rubble), and the relatively high temperatures imply that the upper portion of the permafrost may often be in liquid form.

I.E.I. is not alone in suggesting an interest in Solis Lacus. Perhaps its staunchest advocate is Robert L. Huguenin of the University of Massachusetts, who has been studying the region for half a dozen years and who describes it, among Martian locales, as "my first favorite place."

In October of 1973, on the second day of a huge dust storm over Solis Lacus, Huguenin and some colleagues took some spectroscopic images of the area and discovered what he calls "a huge ring of ground haze and frost surrounding the central dust cloud." Considering the dry state of most of the rest of the Martian surface (since confirmed by the Viking landers), Huguenin concludes that several hundredths of a gram of water had been evaporated from each gram of the soil of Solis Lacus. In other words, all of the material close enough to the surface to be reached by the Sun's heat for evaporation purposes consisted of several percent water. Similar phenomena have been reported during Solis Lacus dust storms in 1956 and 1971, yet dust storms in other regions at the same time, Huguenin says, showed no such signs.

Another line of evidence has been provided by the infrared temperature mappers on the Viking orbiters. Their data indicate that Solis Lacus cools more slowly after sunset than does most of Mars, and that in the pre-dawn hours, when the surface should have reached its near-coldest point, Solis Lacus is significantly warmer than the surrounding terrain. This is just what would happen if there were a substantial water reservoir just below the surface, since, says Huguenin, "damp soils can conduct heat better than dry soils, and as a result they retain more heat and

cool more slowly."

The atmospheric pressure at the Martian surface is so low—barely half a percent of Earth's—that water can survive only briefly in liquid form. One might thus expect that a thin layer of surface material would be inadequate to keep out the near-vacuum trying to boil the liquid away. Huguenin, however, talks about calculations showing that even a few centimeters of sand-sized particles (which would not nestle so closely together as the finer dust grains which are probably also present) could do the trick.

So, whether you reach the area by descent from orbit or overland from elsewhere (such as the Tharsis rise to the northwest), visit Solis Lacus, pick your spot and simply sit down. Toss away a few of the bigger chunks on the surface, stick your fingers (even if they're gloved by a pressure suit) down a little way and pull them out again. Look quickly, because they'll dry out in a hurry. But if they're damp—you'll have the message.

It is just possible, furthermore, that Solis Lacus could have another message—the most significant one of all. "Biologically speaking," Huguenin says, "there couldn't be a more interesting spot on the planet." Temperatures at Solis Lacus are above the melting point of ice for more than half the 688-day Martian year, from the late southern-hemisphere winter to the late summer. In fact, if the salts indicated elsewhere on Mars by the Viking landers exist in the water beneath Solis Lacus, the freezing point of that water may be low enough for it to stay liquid the year around. This would not only provide a possible abode for some conceivable life-forms; it could also have prevented the formation of the active oxidants deduced from the Viking lander data and cited to explain the lack of detectable organic material. Life on Earth, of course, has been found virtually everywhere on the planet, whereas a biological oasis at Solis Lacus might indicate a world with life in some places but not in others—unlikely by the restricted experience of Earth-limited biologists. But the question is too important to be tossed aside on the strength of the inconclusive Viking data. So if you are actually motivated to give Solis Lacus a visit, maybe you should take a microscope. ★

The wonders of "real" space are at least as remarkable as any environments dreamed up for novels, movies or television; hence this column—a regular travel guide for the spacefarer. Jonathan Eberhart is Space Sciences editor for Science News.



A damp glove—signs of rare liquid water on a dry world.

The Model Makers at Magicam

How they survived
"Star Trek—The Motion Picture"

By DAVID HOUSTON

When *Star Trek* finally emerges as a completed motion picture (in December, hopefully), the sighs of relief will create a positive gale. No other film in recent Hollywood history has faced so many reversals and upsets, endured so many production scandals, and so often flirted with financial ruin.

When Robert Wise was announced as director, in March 1978, the earlier budget of \$6 million was more than doubled. But there were rumors that several million had already been utterly wasted on prior production. One bit of evidence for this:

The set for the bridge of the Starship *Enterprise* was designed and erected at a cost of over a million dollars—and then completely reworked when there was a change in art directors.

Along with Robert Wise, Paramount then hired Robert Abel to handle special effects—which he reportedly said he could complete for around \$4 million. But by December of '78, according to a report in *New West* magazine, he had spent more than his allotted \$4 million and had not delivered a single foot of film. Furthermore, his new estimate of the cost was \$16 million.

Abel and his hundred or so employees were fired, and Douglas Trumbull (of *2001*, *Silent Running*, and *Close Encounters* fame) joined *Star Trek* and literally started over on special effects, with John Dykstra (of *Star Wars* and *Battlestar Galactica* fame) to assist him.

In parting, Robert Abel (best known for his splendid psychedelic TV commercials) mentioned that his constant problem was that the script was continually being rewritten.

From all reports, this is perfectly true. The confused writing credits indicate as much: Dennis Lynton Clark has written the final script from a draft by Harold Livingston and Gene Roddenberry based on a story by Alan Dean Foster and Gene Roddenberry.

From our scouting around, it seems that the only *Star Trek* contributor (aside from Roddenberry and many of the actors) to have stayed with the project—without being fired, hired midstream or shunted from one department to another—is Magicam Corp., the Paramount subsidiary responsible for supplying miniatures for the film.

"Our involvement with *Star Trek* has been a political nightmare, but we've tried to ignore it," says Carey Melcher, vice president of Magicam.

"I can't think of anyone in special effects—except maybe Howard Anderson and Frank Van der Veer—who has *not* worked on *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* at some time or other," says Jim Dow, creative head and chief model builder at Magicam. Jim was also a chief builder and handler for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and in the past has worked with many of today's effects wizards—including John Dykstra and Robert Abel.

We asked these two men to tell us the Magicam side of the *Star Trek* story. They spoke candidly—one might even say courageously—and in the process revealed enticing information about the space vehicles of the movie: what they look like, how they work, how they were made, how much they cost. And they talked about the growth of the special effects industry since they helped to make *Silent Running*.

Carey Melcher: "Back in the beginning, in September '77, we were contracted to make models for *Star Trek* as a TV series. The contract was under Bob Goodwin, who was at that time going to be the producer. Even though we were a Paramount company, we had to submit bids just like any outsiders. We were expensive, because we're a union shop, but they knew we could do the work. We were

Left: Jim Dow airbrushing the Klingon model. Right: The "kit" of the dry dock model—over 100,000 pieces produced in three months are ready for assembly, which required a crew of six another three months.





asked to do four models: the Klingon battlecruiser, the *Enterprise* . . .”

Jim Dow: “No, sorry Carey; at that time the new *Enterprise* was being done by Don Loos—who made the original one for TV. We were constructing the Klingon ship, the V’GER, the dry dock and the space-office complex.”

Melcher: “Right. We got the *Enterprise* later.”

In the story, the crew of the *Enterprise* encounters the wreckage of an ancient NASA probe, Voyager VI, which has been transformed into a conscious entity that identifies

itself as V’GER. It is interesting to note that this story idea dates all the way back to a proposed TV pilot in 1977.

Dow: “Don Loos is a very fine model maker, but his techniques were a bit antiquated and his model was made for television. No way could it have stood up to motion-picture photography. So we were ultimately given that job, too. But back in phase one, we completed all four of our models without once seeing Loos’ model of the *Enterprise*.”

Melcher: “We were on a fixed bid, so much per model. As far as I know, that’s the

first time models were fixed-bid.”

Dow: “On *Close Encounters*, for instance, we were all on salary. We just worked on things till we got them done. If somebody today asks what the Mothership cost, it takes a lot of guessing just to come up with an approximation.

“The first design for the space-office complex was by Mike Minor [see his story in STARLOG #25]. It was composed of clusters of dodecahedrons [a solid shape with twelve faces]. We worked on that for months, until we found out that it is literally impossible to cluster dodecahedrons—impossible mathe-



throwing around this bullshit, but we were just the model makers, so—”

Melcher: “We had decided long ago that we would not stick our noses into other aspects of production. We were the model builders, nothing else.”

Dow: “So Abel’s group took over, and all our TV models were dismantled, wrapped in plastic and stored away. The TV dry dock, for instance, was about 10 feet by six feet—roughly the size of our *new* dry dock. We started again from scratch, which was depressing.

“As we look back, what was going on was that Abel was an octopus. He was trying to grab everything he could. He wanted to set up a model shop. He’s essentially an artist and an excellent salesman. I worked for him for about eight years. I set up his first slit-scan facility in Burbank.” [Slit-scan is a technique developed by Doug Trumbull for *2001*.]

Melcher: “But seeing as we were already a part of Paramount Pictures, we had an in, so to speak, our foot in the door. From somewhere—I’ve never known where—Paramount made the decision that we would remain on the job. They also allowed Abel to set up a small shop at his Seward facility—where he was installing motion-control cameras. Abel hired a small staff to babysit the models, and we were perfectly happy about this.”

Dow: “I sat with the saucers for *CE3K* for a good six months. And that’s a tremendous waste of time. All you’re doing is waiting, being on hand, in case something happens. If a light blows, you replace it. And you set up the model and take it down.

“When Paramount made its decision to keep us on, that’s when we took on the con-

Left: Jim Dow (left) discusses model construction techniques with Melcher and Director Wise standing in the dry dock model.

matically. Mike could draw it—and it looked terrific—but we couldn’t make it work. We had to use a simpler shape.”

Melcher: “In December 1977, we began sensing the winds of change. The TV production was put into a hiatus situation. Then we heard that *Star Trek* was going to be a feature.”

Dow: “Around the first week in January, Richard Taylor [Abel’s creative director], Bob Abel and the whole entourage from Abel Productions came roaring through our shop informing us that there was no way in hell that any of the things we had built could be utilized for a feature. It all had to be scrapped. Even then I thought his reasoning was off base. He told us we couldn’t use incandescent lights on the ships, because you would see the filaments when the models were filmed with a motion-control camera. Funny—the Mothership in *CE3K* had incandescents all over it. The pinpoints of light at the ends of all the booms are incandescent. And it was shot with motion-control. So there they were

Right: Phil Rawlings (left), Roddenberry, Richard Taylor and Robert Wise discuss changes on the saucer area of the *Enterprise*.



tract to do the *Enterprise* as well. Our package was complete at that point. Farther down the line, the spacesuits, communicators and all attendant hand props were talked about, but we had too much work to do. Those were given to Brick Price Movie Miniatures."

Melcher: "At the beginning of our work on the feature project, we had eight people on staff. As the months went on, we built up to around 20."

Dow: "In February we began construction of the *Enterprise*. The Travel Pod and the Work Bee started taking shape later in the spring. Then we began work on the space-office complex; and over the ensuing nine months those models were finished. The first model to be delivered was the Klingon ship—in July 1978. The *Enterprise* was delivered in September or October, as were the Travel Pod and Work Bee. Then we started gearing up to make the dry dock."

Weren't there a good many changes made in the design of the *Enterprise*?

Melcher: "They kept adding lights and more and more details. The umbilical cord [the cable carrying electric lines] was so



Chris Crump fits the propulsion pods onto the refurbished *Enterprise*.



Jim Dow and Richard Taylor discuss the basic armature for Spock's Vulcan shuttle.

powerful that it emitted a radio frequency that kept causing the computer to lose its memory during filming."

Dow: "A similar thing happened on *CE3K*. We found that the high-voltage neon was arcing to the armature. I took a 15,000-volt charge once, when a saucer grounded out on the motion-control system."

How was the *Enterprise* built?

Dow: "The base is of aluminum—a cylinder in the main body, struts of half-inch aluminum plate, and a half-inch tubular truss to support the saucer. The model has a five-way armature, so it can be photographed from a variety of angles, with absolute-zero positioning. If it has to be reshot, it can be remounted and positioned exactly as before.

The armatures on *CE3K* and *Star Wars* weren't anywhere near as tight as these.

"The skin is made of a variety of vacuum-formed techniques. The saucer is eight-inch ABS [a tough heat-resistant plastic]. The body is transparent butyrate; and the struts are vacuum-formed styrene backed up with foam and sandwiched onto the half-inch aluminum plate.

"Almost all the cabin portholes are neon—neon because the model had to be sealed, and neon has the longest life and generates the least amount of heat. It was next to impossible to provide maintenance ports in the *Enterprise* because it's such a smooth-skinned object. We didn't have the luxury of all that nerny detail that the *Star Wars* models had, to hide the lines of the panel openings. But now they've added so much skin detail—which I'm sorry to see, esthetically—that we could have done it. Our job would have been much easier: we could have opened it up for access to the lights and wiring."

Melcher: "All the time we were working on the *Enterprise*, the design of the dry dock was going through change after change. The changes were all coming from the Abel Group, and they all were incredibly complex and expensive."

Dow: "Every time I'd go back to them with a price on it, they'd come apart!"

Melcher: "They were seeing what a miniature really costs, all by itself."

Dow: "Originally, their idea was that it should be a spiderweb truss (Mike Minor's original design) in space—the dry dock in which the *Enterprise* would be refurbished to go on its way. To get this spiderweb effect, I devised a way of injection-molding 100,000

little parts that were to be strung on 1/60,000-inch diameter rods, spaced a half-inch apart. That would require a tremendous amount of labor. We gave them a price, and they choked. A quarter of a million dollars.

"They said we had to cut that in half. I said, 'Okay, the only way we can cut it in half is to utilize a system that I feel really would be utilized in space: something like an extruded tubular truss. We bid that at \$125,000. They still choked, but said go ahead.

"It took nearly three months just to assemble the thousands and thousands of parts for the dry dock—what we called the kit. We started assembling the kit in, I think, October; and around February we were ready to begin assembly."

Melcher: "Wait a minute. We need a little more history here. Somehow, December is a pivotal month for *Star Trek*. Last December the rumors started again. I went away for a week's vacation around Christmas, and when I came back, Bob Abel was out and Doug Trumbull was in. February 5 was our delivery date on the dry dock, and we were almost ready to deliver."

Dow: "Doug took a look at the dry dock. He said he loved it, but he wanted changes."

Melcher: "We said we'd make the changes, but it had to cost somebody."

Dow: "We went on a time-and-materials arrangement at that point, and were operating more in tune with the way a production normally works. We were pulled in under the arm of *Star Trek*; and then anybody could walk in and make changes."

Melcher: "What that all explains is that when we delivered the completed and altered dry dock, the final cost was a quarter of a million dollars!"

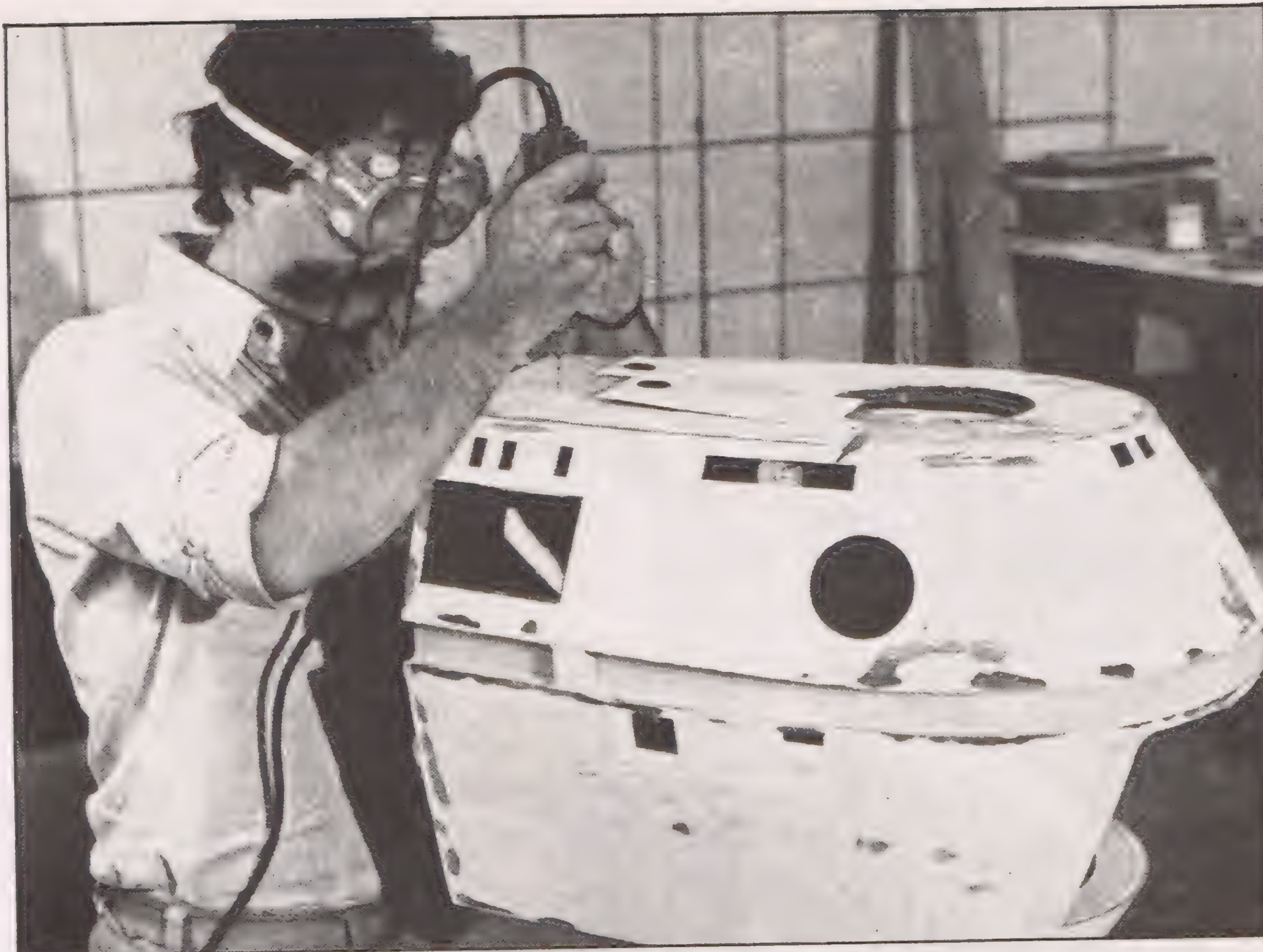


PHOTO: © 1979 MAGICAM

Chriss Ross working on the Travel Pod model. The scale is 2" = 1'.

Dow: "The dry dock now has 54 light panels and about 3,000 volts of neon light per panel. The incandescents are 1 1/2 to five volts. The tubular truss is half-inch tubular brass, precision-bent, the parts were hand-made and RTV [silicone rubber] molds were taken.

"We then went into a limited run production, casting in a variety of space-age plastics and chemistries. The model is about 12 feet long, six feet wide, and about four feet deep."

Melcher: "One thing that increased the cost was that Abel and Taylor wanted to be able to get a camera *inside* the dry dock. This meant that we had to make one side wild [removable], and that meant plugs for all the electrics, connectors for the trusses and so on. Now Trumbull and Robert Wise say they don't need this at all."

Dow: "Incidentally, let me say for the record that I have total respect for Richard Taylor. He's a very talented guy. Anyway, back to the dry dock; the pieces of the lighting panels had to be made from thermally stable material, so they'd act as heat sinks for the lamps—which create about 175 degrees each. If we had used incandescent, we'd have been dealing with around 400 degrees. There was a tremendous amount of engineering that had to go into this thing.

"And what Abel's group was supplying for designs I wouldn't put in the kitchen to train my puppy with. They would give us one or two rough sketches with no details whatsoever. They brought in extremely unprofessional and incomplete drawings and walked away expecting us to build from them. Fortunately for them, we were able to do it—because most of us here have been in industrial design.

"We did the fine-tuned designs. And when we'd go to the *Star Trek* office, we'd hear, 'Well, we're already paying Abel for design. We can't pay you, too.' We'd say, 'Wait a minute; look at what they're giving us as design!' Of course those people really didn't

understand what was going on. We just had to swallow and go ahead and do it."

Melcher: "*Star Trek* totally rehabilitated Robert Abel's facility on Highland and then set up a totally new facility for him on Seward [both in Hollywood]. Then they closed down the Seward plant when Doug Trumbull came in in December, and opened a new one for him on Maxella [in Venice, Ca.]. All within a period of two years, and all for one picture."

(The Maxella facility is a block or so from Trumbull's Glencoe plant, where the *CE3K* saucer sequences were made and where new computer cameras are being installed for the *Star Trek* movie.)

"And at last report, John Dykstra is doing the Klingon sequence out at his plant in the San Fernando Valley."

Dow: "Dykstra has the Klingon ship, the Work Bee and a sort of trailer unit that attaches to the Work Bee, which we call the Grabber. The dry dock, the *Enterprise* and the Travel Pod are down at Maxella."

Were all models delivered on time—despite alterations?

Dow: (laughing) "Yeah. The models were finished before the script was."

STARLOG reporters have been repeatedly surprised to discover that the same names keep popping up as we explore the special effects world of Hollywood. Jim Dow agrees:

Dow: "We've discovered there's a very small family, a very small town here when it comes to special effects."

His reminiscence helps eliminate some of those apparent coincidences.

Dow: "Magicam came into being around the same time that *Silent Running* [1972] was being made. On *Silent Running* [conceived and directed by Douglas Trumbull], we had John Dykstra, Wayne Smith [who, with David Garber, runs Universal's Hartland SFX facility, where *Buck Rogers* and the latter half of *Galactica* were done], Bob Shepherd [production manager at Apogee], John Balmbach who subsequently went off

to Colorado and disappeared, Jamie Short [who works at MPI], Jamie's brother Bill, and Don Trumbull—Doug's father.

"Around that time, Bob Shepherd and Wayne Smith started a company called the Cumulus Group—and I did some free-lance work for them. [See story on Hartland SFX facility on page 32.]

"Also, right after *Silent Running*, Doug Trumbull helped Joe Matza, Rob King and the others sell Magicam to Paramount. Doug then sold his interest to Paramount. It was around that time, and sort of part of the same negotiations, that Doug's Future General Company was born [where *CE3K* effects were later done].

"I was off in Europe at that time. When I came back, the Cumulus Group wasn't doing too well. It had a hangar at Santa Monica Airport, and Magicam had the hangar across the street. They closed down Cumulus and came across the street. Then Magicam was working on a Paramount pilot for a series of *War of the Worlds*. George Jein [model maker who worked on the Mothership of *CE3K*] and Mike Minor [in the *Star Trek* art department at Paramount, he designed some of the surface of Vulcan for the new movie] and Jerry Greenwood [worked on *Star Wars* and with Dykstra] and I were putting together that test. At that time, Bob Shepherd was in the position I'm in now—creative director in charge of miniatures for Magicam.

"John Dykstra was assisting Doug with Future General; and Wayne Smith and Bob Shepherd were sort of bouncing back and forth between Future General and Magicam.

"An interesting story that I heard—and I'm pretty sure it's accurate—is that George Lucas approached Doug Trumbull down at the Redwood building of Future General with the *Star Wars* script. Doug read it and came back and said, 'It's too violent; I don't want to have anything to do with it.' And he threw it out. John Dykstra picked it up and read it and asked Doug if he'd mind introducing him to George Lucas. Doug said sure, made the introduction and John got the job.

"John then put together Industrial Light and Magic, and Bob Shepherd left Future General for ILM—where he assisted John about three-quarters of the way through *Star Wars*. At that point, *Close Encounters* came through, and Bob returned to be production manager at Future General on *CE3K*. Bob then brought me in to oversee the miniatures."

If it is true that the SFX community in Hollywood is like a small family, then surely *Star Trek* provided a sort of all-inclusive family reunion. Even some of Robert Abel's past employees are now working for Doug Trumbull on the film.

If *Star Trek* falls down in the technical departments, it won't be from a lack of talent. (Jim Dow does express a kind of vague concern, through, about there being "too many chefs in the kitchen.") And it certainly won't be from a lack of money. Paramount, expressing an almost blind faith in the project, has reportedly now spent more than \$30 million on the little film that started as a TV pilot a couple of years ago. ★

STAR TREK REPORT

Filming the Klingons' Destruction



PHOTO: NBC-TV

Mark Lenard (right) appeared as Spock's father in "Journey to Babel" and as a Romulan in "Balance of Terror," now plays a Klingon.

Pardon me while I defect. I just can't help it. You'd feel the same way too if you were on the Klingon set. What a ship! What glorious battles these Klingons must have seen aboard this vessel! If I had my druthers, I'd want to serve with these guys. Scary? You bet! One *sneer* from any one of them is probably lethal. I don't care. They are so deliciously malevolent, so tantalizingly terrifying as to be irresistible. Too bad they all die in the movie.

My first encounter with the Klingons is in the Paramount commissary. There, seated around a long table, are nine—count 'em—nine Klingons, sporting the swarthiest of makeup, including a bone ridge running from the base of the skull, up over the crown, terminating at the nose. Different than previous Klingons we've met, but definitely, recognizably Klingons. They have removed their militaristic-looking costume jackets, and sit in undershirts and suspended pants, munching on chef salads (which, judging from the appearance of this group of nasties, probably contain the chef himself). They look like lodge brothers, initiates in some strange sort of coven. Even their boots, with their toe spikes, promise a cloven hoof inside.

I am greeted with, "Hello, Susan." Uh oh! Am I on the Klingon's hit list? Then I recognize the voice under all that makeup. "Mark!" It's Mark Lenard, the Klingon captain. Relieved, I pull up a chair and chow down with my new-found heroes.

The *Star Trek* movie's opening scenes show a strange alien force attacking three Klingon ships, and judging from what I'm seeing of

the Klingons and their wonderfully grungy ship with its gun turrets and Klingon language scrawled all over the various consoles, this is going to be one heck of an opening. Doug Trumbull's description of the ship rings true: "It's like a Japanese submarine in World War II that's been at sea too long." Below the set, which is built up on a wooden trussed platform, smudge pots and fans are sending clouds of "fog" up into every dark corner of this bridge, heightening the effect.

Mark Lenard is spitting out orders to his crew. I don't understand the harsh Klingon words he uses, but he gets the point across. Their ship is being attacked. Battle Stations! The Klingon crew staggers around the bridge, caught in their death throes. Then it's the captain's turn to die. Mark obediently dies on cue. Again. And again. Klingons die hard. (Of course, Robert Wise's quest for perfection as he directs this scene may have something to do with it also.)

It took three days to kill off the Klingons, and I'll really miss them. I keep looking in the corners of Stage 12, hoping one of them might still be lurking. But, sadly, they are all gone.

Following completion of the Klingon scenes, we filmed the final live-action scene on a set just a few meters from the now-dark Klingon bridge. Epsilon Nine, a Federation outpost on the Klingon border (literally!), also falls victim to this alien menace. David Gautreaux plays Commander Branch, the head honcho of this outpost. You may recall that David was once going to play the young Vulcan Lieutenant Xon when we had planned to do a television movie. His assis-

tant, identified in the script as "female lieutenant," is played by Michele Ammeen Billy. Michele had marked time while awaiting her part by doubling as scriptwriter Harold Livingston's secretary. She and David have appeared in several plays together, but this is their first joint film appearance. The set they work in is so crisp and clean that it takes some getting used to. It's bright, well-lit, with beautiful floors and colorful consoles. But I notice that the art department had some fun with this one, too. Above one of the consoles is a panel showing the duty roster for the outpost. Among the names up there (which I doubt were picked up by the camera) are the following: R. D. Enberry, M. Minor, L. Cole, R. McKenzie and Gort. In case you're wondering, Mike Minor, Lee Cole and Richard McKenzie are all members of the *Star Trek* art department. As for R. D. Enberry and Gort, I'll leave those for you to figure out!

With completion of this second-unit filming (headed up by cinematographer Bruce Logan), we have concluded all of our post-production scenes at Paramount. Optical work continues, of course, and the film *will* be on target—release is still set for December. Jerry Goldsmith has begun composing his musical score, and judging from the lavish praises he's been receiving from the critics on his score for *Alien*, the *Star Trek* music should be very exciting.

Recently, the principal cast has been returning to the Paramount lot for looping sessions. Film editor Todd Ramsey was very impressed with Leonard Nimoy's skill at synchronization, remarking that the actor was one of the most professional he had ever worked with.

Gene Roddenberry recently was attacked by a vicious Klingon spider. (Actually, it was posing as a brown recluse, a poisonous spider with venom even stronger than a black widow's.) He wasn't aware of it at the time, and assumed that he was coming down with the flu; he even gave a talk at a local Los Angeles college while running a fever of 106°. He finally had to be taken to the hospital, where his doctor noticed his swollen, inflamed leg and administered the proper antibiotics. He's fully recovered and is busy working on the completion of the *Star Trek* movie novelization.

Persis Khambatta recently dropped by. Her dark hair has grown in beautifully, and is now about as long as the famous Mia Farrow style. Her charming, sari-bedecked mother was with her, visiting from her native India, along with Persis' latest flame, a handsome young man from Germany. ★

David Garber and Wayne Smith,
directors at the new Hartland special-effects facility of
Universal Studios, reveal the hectic history of
The space battle nobody saw:

'Buck Rogers' Versus 'Battlestar Galactica'

By DAVID HOUSTON

Like many current special-effects stories, a chronicle leading to the conflict between the theatrical *Buck Rogers* and TV's *Battlestar Galactica* might begin: Once upon a time there was Douglas Trumbull. (Trumbull is best known for his work on *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Silent Running*, *The Andromeda Strain* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.) But for Wayne Smith and David Garber, directors of Universal's new Hartland SFX department, it really begins a little earlier.

In the days of *2001*, both of these gentlemen were sidling toward careers in the special-effects industry through college majors in industrial design.

"I was in architecture first," says Smith, "and then changed to industrial design—at Cal State, Long Beach (California). Industrial design was sort of a catch-all at college. People who didn't want to do anything else ended up there, or who didn't know what they wanted to do." The special-effects bug had not yet bitten.

David Garber was elsewhere doing much the same. "I finished in architecture at Carnegie Tech and then went to Yale to study environmental design."

After school, Wayne Smith worked for a time as a designer at a New York firm. When he realized it wasn't for him, he "got the hell out of there and headed back to California."

It was a thesis project that directed David Garber toward the West Coast—and into movies:

"It was to be a large, traveling, inflatable science-fiction circus, a weekend event to travel to college campuses. The idea was picked up by Warner Brothers. We built it,

and got it ready to go. That's how I met Douglas Trumbull.

"We went to him because the last section of the circus was to have a 70-mm film projected onto three surfaces of a 60-foot pyramid. This turned out to be a really interesting experiment because we were dealing with right angles instead of a flat screen. As the images went around the corners, they stretched.

"When it was all but ready to go, Warner Brothers dumped it. It was an idea that killed itself. Warner kept wanting more and more in the way of props and attractions—until it got out of hand and was no longer practical.

"We didn't use Doug Trumbull on the project; he was too expensive. But several of us got together later and formed an idea for futuristic arcades and new entertainment forms for amusement parks. That's when I met Wayne. He was freelancing, just before Doug formed his Future General company."

Smith interjects. "I worked with Doug on some commercials and on the *The Andromeda Strain*. And I was art director on *Silent Running*."

Around this time, John Dykstra left Future General to form Industrial Light and Magic, the company responsible for the special effects in *Star Wars*.

During development of the special effects for *Close Encounters*, both Wayne Smith and David Garber were employed by Future General; but they were off in another department (though they did some *CE3K* pre-production work).

"Future General was originally set up to work on other projects for Paramount," says Wayne. "David and I worked on Trumbull's

Super-70 system and the amusement park dark rides." (See the story behind these projects in *FUTURE #1*.)

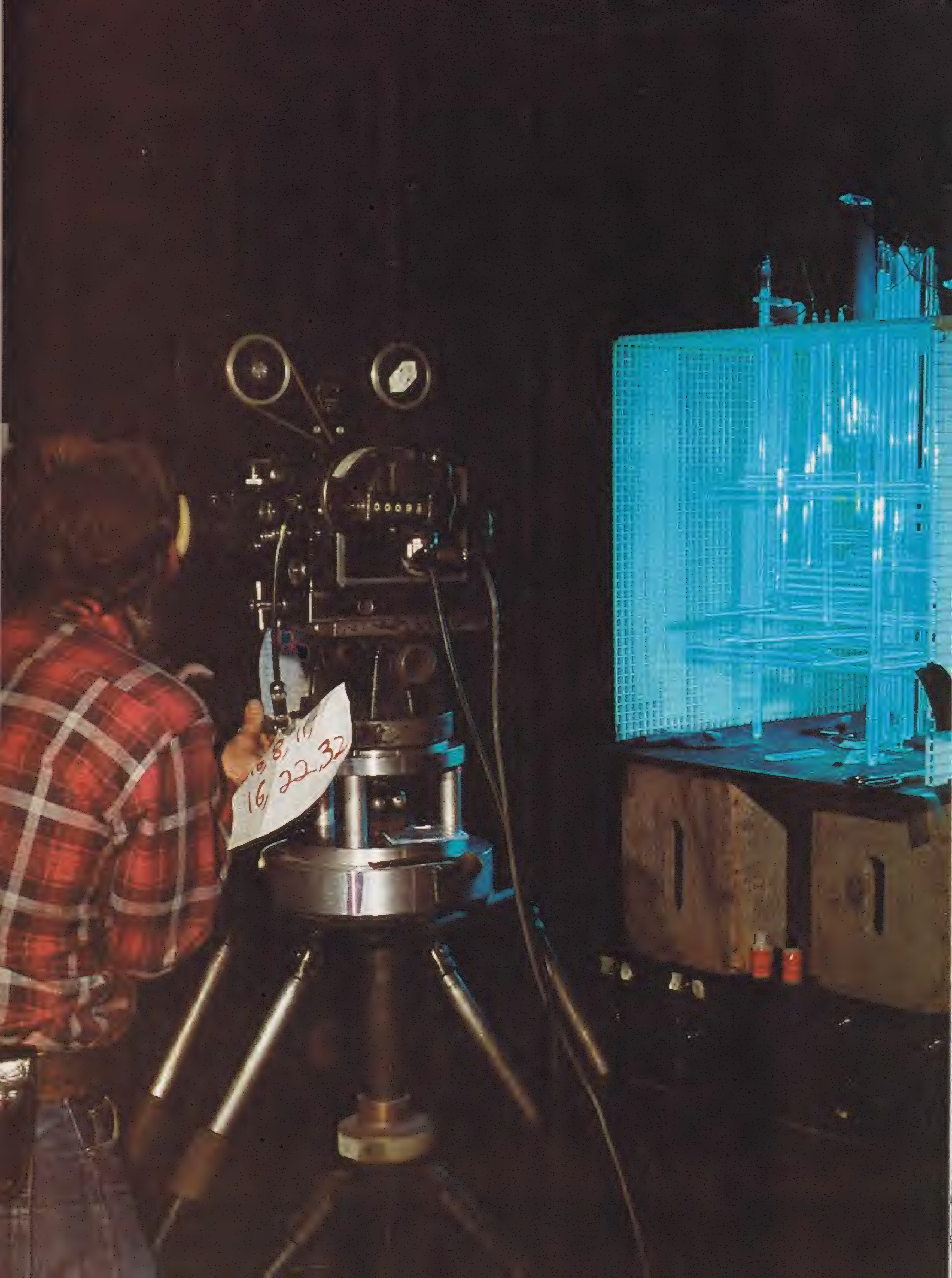
Says Garber, "We actually made the full-scale dark ride, in an industrial building, with 100 feet of track and a car that held five or six passengers. Wayne and I designed the film, shot the scenes, everything, for that ride."

Smith and Garber were slated to make the world's first film using Trumbull's Super-70 process. "It was to have exploited the system—reminiscent of the first Cinerama film. We wanted to go to really unusual sites around the world to take advantage of Super-70's capability to record spectacularly clear images. Wayne and I wrote the script, investigated some of the sites, prepared the production budget and were getting ready to shoot it. In fact, we had researched the volcanoes in Hawaii and were ready when one blew on the Big Island. But Paramount said, 'Don't go; we're not sure we need the footage.'"

Smith: "Then all that fell apart. Paramount didn't want to go ahead with it."

Garber: "Paramount just did not want to go into any markets other than what they were already in: just plain theatrical films. Apparently, none of the people at the studio had the foresight to know that Super-70 and the dark rides would be incredibly marketable. So when *Close Encounters* was finished, Paramount wanted to just shut down the Glencoe plant." (Glencoe is the street in

John Moulds, assistant cameraman at the Universal-Hartland special effects facility, readies the lightship for a take. This was the first major model built at Hartland.



16 8 16
16 22 32



A Cylon garage. Note the miniature at the far right: it was made from one of the commercially available Monogram kits. The kits were available before the show premiered; many of them were used as smaller models in the show.

Venice, California, where Future General was located.)

"Around that time," says Smith, "*Buck Rogers* came through." This was the first version of *Buck Rogers*—proposed as a weekly TV series with Andy Fennedy as executive producer and David Gerrold as story editor. "Paramount wanted nothing to do with *Buck Rogers*; Doug Trumbull wanted nothing to do with *Buck Rogers*; so David and I jumped on it."

Garber: "We were approached by Dick Caffey, the supervising producer. Paramount and Columbia had just finished *Close Encounters*; they had all this equipment for special effects, and therefore many talented people, and couldn't think of any way to use them. They couldn't see beyond the forest. They even knew, back then, that they'd have *Star Trek* coming up. Well, you know how they handled that." (See "Magicam" article on page 26.)

Smith: "We set up a deal between Paramount (owners of Trumbull's Future General company), Columbia (makers of *Close Encounters*) and Universal (producers of *Buck Rogers*) to lease the Glencoe facility and

equipment for *Buck Rogers*."

Garber: "About three weeks after we made our deal with Universal, the Paramount people realized they had nobody left to do *Star Trek*."

(By now, John Dykstra—world famous for his work on *Star Wars*—had changed his

company's name from Industrial Light and Magic to Apogee, and was at work on the early stages of special effects for *Battlestar Galactica*.)

Garber: "We had a depressing false start on *Buck Rogers*. We got a script and started
(continued on page 44)

Mike Fink (left) and Kenneth Larson—model makers—add detail to the surface of the "Draconia."

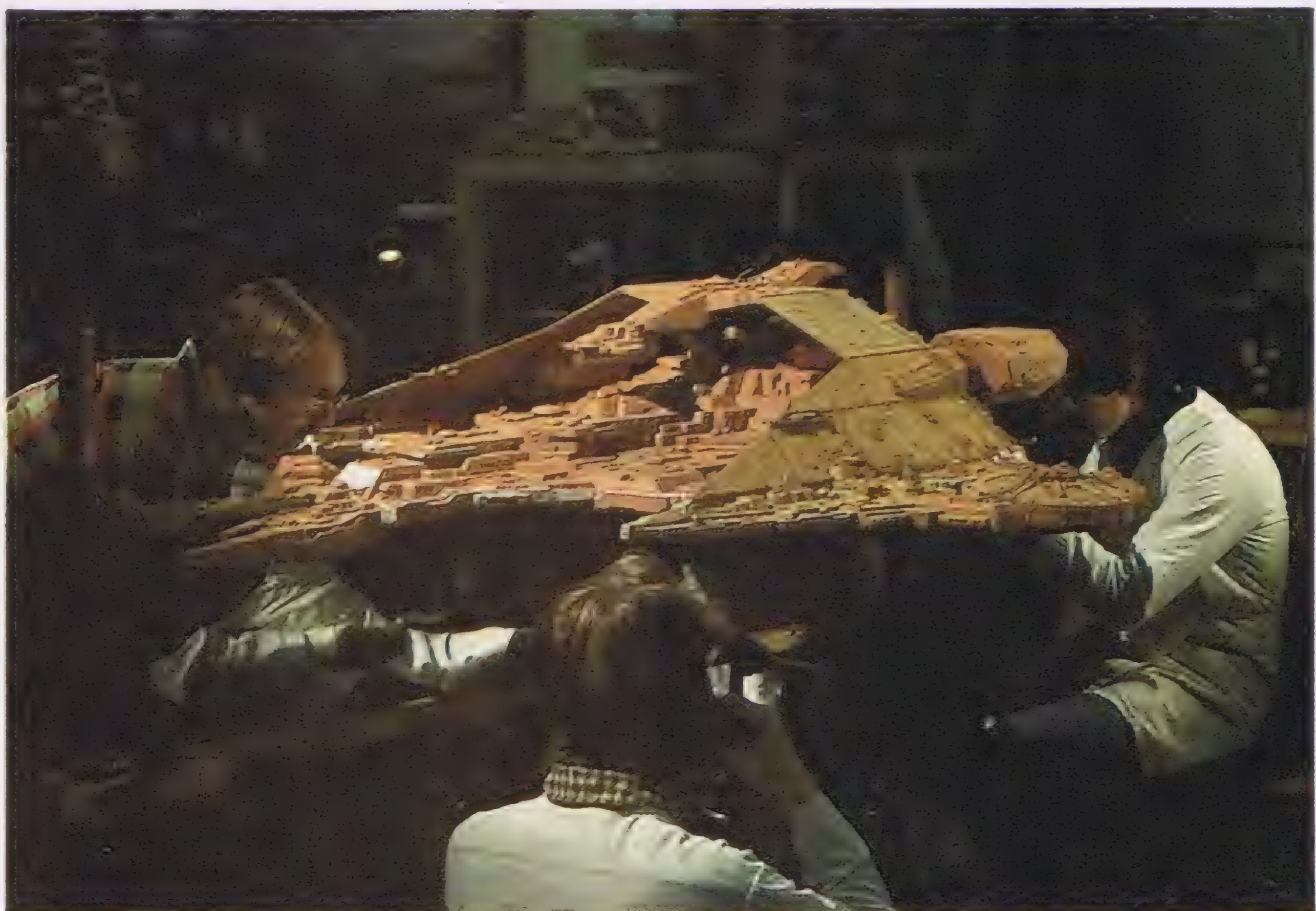


PHOTO: 1979 UNIVERSAL

'Battlestar Galactica'

You Can't Quite Call It a "Wrap"

Glen Larson—musician, screenwriter, producer—had wanted to do something like *Galactica*, he told us, long before he saw *Star Wars*. That Lucas blockbuster, though, gave Larson's idea "legs"—as they say in show biz—made *Galactica* seem a profitable notion that could stand on its own and walk away with a bundle.

Utilizing the space-opera setting and special-effects vocabulary of *Star Wars*, Larson proceeded to turn out the most elaborate and expensive hour-long series ever devised for television. He piled a lot of weight on those legs.

Merchandisers—who had been learning the hard way how valuable a space movie or TV property can be—flocked to the *Galactica* banner. Before the show had been seen, Monogram had already released kits of the spaceships (some of which actually showed up on TV as "real" Cylon discs). Mattel—who passed over *Star Wars*, feeling that the TV *Galactica* would have a longer life—came out with a vast line of dolls and toys. And Howard Eldon Ltd. had already tooled the start of an extensive line of *Galactica* jewelry. Not to mention posters, T-shirts and the like.

The three-hour pilot movie, about the near-annihilation of the human race by the merciless cybernetic Cylons, played in Europe, Japan and Canada as a theatrical movie around the time it aired here as a TV pilot. The box office and ratings were good, not top-of-the-mark, but quite respectable.

During the run of the TV show, however, the weekly ratings dropped from up in the top 10 to down in the bottom 20. If *Galactica* had been an ordinary show, with ordinary expenses, it would surely have been renewed for a second season; but nothing about *Galactica* was ordinary—from the spectacular special effects (begun by John Dykstra and taken over by David Garber and Wayne Smith), to the enormous settings and Lorne Greene's whopper of a salary.

So the show was canceled. Universal Television—with its marketing arrangements and the release of its theatrical version of *Galactica* (overseas and then in America, augmented with Sensurround)—fared well with *Galactica*. ABC-TV, however, saw its advertising revenues dropping below the enormous fee they were paying to Universal.

When a show is canceled, all security concerning its production is lifted, as a rule. Not



The crew of the *Galactica* (from left): Tony Swartz, Herb Jefferson Jr., Anne Lockhart, Lorne Greene, Maren Jensen, Richard Hatch, Laurette Spang and Dirk Benedict.

so with *Galactica*. When a member of the press calls, and executives and publicity people say, "There's nothing that we can tell you at this time," that means something interesting is going on.

Some digging turned up the following information. None of this could be absolutely confirmed, but all sources are reliable and are connected in some way with *Galactica* productions.

- When ABC dropped the show, Universal attempted to sell *Galactica* to either NBC or CBS. Both networks expressed interest, but CBS went furthest by considering adding *Galactica* as a mid-season replacement.

- In the final analysis, CBS did not buy the show.

- A second theatrical feature based on the TV episodes has been completed and is ready for release overseas. No American release date has been set. This show is a composite of the episodes "Fire in Space" and "The Living Legend." Very little additional footage had to be shot for the movie. The one extra scene involves an astronaut floating in space who comes upon a floating book: the *Galactica* log.

The 12 Battlestar Galactica Movies

Just as this issue of STARLOG goes to press, we have received word that MCA television has acquired the first season of *Battlestar Galactica* for syndication to local stations. The 17 *Galactica* episodes are now being recut to run as 12 telefilms, each of which will be two hours in length (including commercial breaks). The syndicated *Galactica* is expected to begin airing toward the end of 1979, and the 12-part package has already been sold to stations in New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Washington, St. Louis, Atlanta, Indianapolis, Denver, Sacramento, Memphis, Salt Lake City, Tampa, Nashville, Milwaukee and Kansas City. Galacticans not living in these areas are advised to write to the programming directors of their local stations to express their enthusiasm for the continued life of the *Battlestar*. ★

'BATTLESTAR GALACTICA'

Episode Guide

(ABC-TV/Universal, 1978-79)

Cast

Captain Apollo Richard Hatch
Lt. Starbuck Dirk Benedict
Commander Adama Lorne Greene
Lt. Boomer Herb Jefferson Jr.
Athena Maren Jensen
Cassiopea Laurette Spang
Flight Sgt. Jolly Tony Swartz
Boxey Noah Hathaway
Col. Tigh Terry Carter
Baltar John Colicos
Flt. Corp. Rigel Sarah Rush
Flt. Officer Omega David Greenan
Sheba Anne Lockhart
Dr. Salik George Murdock
Dr. Wilker John Dullaghan
Brie Janet Louise Johnson
Bojay Jack Stauffer
Greenbean Ed Begley Jr.
Voice of Imperious Leader Patrick Macnee
Voice of Lucifer Jonathan Harris
Muffit the Daggit Evie the Chimp
Imperious Leader Dick Durock

Crew

Executive Producer and Creator Glen A. Larson
 Supervising Producers Leslie Stevens and Michael Sloan
 Producers John Dykstra, Don Bellisario, Paul Playton, David O'Connell
 Special Effects Coordinator John Dykstra
 Directors of Photography Ben Colman, John Penner
 Associate Producers Winrich Kolbe, David Phinney
 Music Stu Phillips
 "Galactica" Theme Glen A. Larson, Stu Phillips
 Music Performance Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra
 Art Director John E. Chilberg II
 Film Editors Robert L. Kimble A.C.E., Leon Ortiz-Gil, Larry Strong
 Costume Designer Jean-Pierre Dorleac
 Sound Effects Editor Peter Berkos, M.P.S.E.
 Special Effects Karl Miller, Joe Goss
 Titles Design Wayne Fitzgerald
 Title & Optical Effects Universal Title
 Special Electronic Effects John Peyser Jr.

Miniature & Optical Effects

Supervised by Universal Hartland
 Unit Supervisors David M. Garber and Wayne Smith
 Production Coordinator Peter Anderson
 Special Effects Photography Peter Gibbons-Fly
 Alex Funke, Keith White
 Camera Ray Monahan, John Moulds
 David Robman, Charles Schulman
 David Stipes
 Key Grip Patrick Murphy
 Key Gaffer James Kibbe
 Chief Model Maker Bryson Gerard
 Model Builders Jerry Allen, Nora J. Allen, Sean Casey, Vance Frederkc, Michael Joyce, Philippe Lantz, Illyanna Lowry, Angelo Mariott, Richard Smiley, Ken Larson
 Effects Illustration & Design Supervisor David Jones
 Effects Illustration & Design Dan Goozee,

Richard Lasley, Jena Holman, Wendy Vanguard

Special Camera Equipment Richard Bennett
 Special Electronics Ray Morgan Elam, George Brennan
 Animation and Rotoscope Design Harry Moreau
 Animators Angela Diamos, Sherry Epperson, Maxwell Morgan
 Optical Supervisor Robert Hall
 Optical Paul Bolger, Phillip Bills, William Brier, James Burton, Jim Catania, Charles Cowles, Frederick Lagenbach, Ronald Longo, Masaaki Norihiro, Eldon Rickman, Richard Ripple, William O'Sullivan, Robert Wilson
 Editorial Assistants David Hill, Dennis Kelly, Cory McCrum, Maureen O'Connell
 Production Assistants Percy Angress M.K., Bos Bailey, Tim McHugh, George Pryor, Mike Gastaldo



Starbuck, a true poker-faced gambler, prepares to show his hand, a perfect pyramid.



PHOTOS © 1978 ABC-TV



Caprician survivor Serina listens to Adama's words of hope.

SAGA OF A STAR WORLD

(3-hour premiere—September 17, 1978)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Richard Colla.

Guest Cast: Jane Seymour (Serina), Lew Ayres (Adar), Ray Milland (Uri), Rick Springfield (Zac), Wilfrid Hyde-White (Anton), Myrna Matthews (Little Supreme), Stephanie Spruill (Other Supreme), Pattie Brooks (Big Supreme), John Fink (Dr. Payne), Sandy Gimpel (Seetol), Dianne L. Burgdorf (Lotay), Ted White (Cylon Centurion #1), John Zenda (Dealer).

In a far off galaxy, the 12 Colonies of Man have come together to end a 1000-year war with the robot Cylon race. However, the peace mission is a trap and the Cylon armada catches the fleet of battlestars offguard; all but one are completely destroyed. The remaining battlestar, the *Galactica*, flees the

devastated star system with a fleet of 220 spacecraft containing the last survivors of their once-great empire. The *Galactica*'s commander, Adama, hopes to find safe refuge on the lost 13th colony, Earth. With little time to escape the advancing Cylon army, the fleet is not properly equipped with food and fuel for the prolonged space voyage ahead. The *Galactica* heads for an ore planet named Carillon where they discover a vast resort complex populated by humans who do not know of the destruction of their home worlds. Soon, Starbuck and Apollo discover the grisly secret of the casino, which is run by the insect creatures known as Ovions, as Adama attempts to prevent a mass Cylon attack from wiping out the last remaining humans.

LOST PLANET OF GODS

(Part 1—September 24, 1978; Part 2—October 1, 1978)



Adama and Omega monitor incoming information from the ragtag fleet of surviving humans.

Writers: Glen A. Larson and Don Bellisario. Director: Chris Nyby Jr. Guest Cast: Jane Seymour (Serina).

Two Viper pilots return to the *Galactica* from a space mission to a nearby planet where they pick up a highly contagious disease. Eager to attend the engagement party of Apollo, they skip decontamination procedures. Within hours, every Viper pilot is stricken with the mysterious disease. Apollo and Starbuck, who had not yet arrived at the party, have escaped contamination and must now lead a group of inexperienced shuttle pilots to fly the *Galactica*'s defensive patrols. As the Cylon basestar, under the command of the traitor Baltar, forces the *Galactica* into a magnetic void, Apollo and Serina are married. At the end of the void, the *Galactica* comes upon the planet Kobol, the legendary birthplace of humanity. There, as Adama searches for information about locating Earth, Baltar launches his surprise Cylon attack.



Commander Adama (Lorne Greene).

THE LOST WARRIOR

(October 8, 1978)

Writer: Don Bellisario from a story by Don Bellisario and Herman Groves. Director: Rod Holcomb.

Guest Cast: Kathy Cannon (Bella), Lance LeGault (Bootees), Claude Earl Jones (LeCerta), Red West (Marco), Johnny Timko (Puppis).

Apollo is marooned on a Wild West-like planet where he befriends a widowed young woman and her son. The woman's husband was killed by Red Eye, the gunman thug of the evil LeCerta. LeCerta extracts money from the townspeople by demanding tribute, lest they face Red Eye. Apollo learns that Red Eye is, in fact, a Cylon Centurion who was damaged in a crash and believes that LeCerta is Imperious Leader. Apollo decides to challenge the Cylon to a duel. Armed with a Colonial blaster that belonged to the young woman's husband, a Colonial Warrior also marooned, Apollo meets the Cylon in the town square. Only the fastest draw will win.

THE LONG PATROL

(October 15, 1978)

Writer: Don Bellisario. Director: Chris Nyby Jr.

Guest Cast: James Whitmore Jr. (Robber), Ted Gehring (Croad), Sean McClory (Assault), Tasha Martell (Adultress), Cathy Paine (Cora the Computer).

Starbuck is assigned to test out a new Viper equipped with an ultra-fast propulsion system and a sentient talking computer named Cora. Unfortunately for Starbuck, because of the size of the new engine, the ship has no laser generators to fire the guns. He loses his ship to a crafty renegade convict. When Starbuck attempts to pursue the thief, he is captured by prison officials who mistake him for the thief. He is taken to a planet where he discovers prisoners who are the descendents of people who were imprisoned long ago.



An Ovion from "Saga of a Star World."

GUN ON ICE PLANET ZERO

(Part 1—October 22, 1978; Part 2—October 29, 1978)

Writers: Leslie Stevens, Michael Sloan and Don Bellisario.

Director: Alan Levi.

Guest Cast: Roy Thinnes (Croft), James Olson (Thane), Dan O'Herlihy (Dr. Ravashol), Danny Miller (Ser Five Nine), Christine Belford (Leda), Britt Ekland (Tenna).

Adama realizes that the *Galactica* is being herded into the path of a giant pulsar cannon by Cylon forces. Apollo and Starbuck are sent down to the ice-bound planet on a search-and-destroy mission with a dangerous band of criminals, who are also demolition experts. The *Galactica* team discovers and joins forces with an enslaved society of clones and they launch their attack on the enemy mountain fortress.

PHOTOS: © UNIVERSAL

Full Steam Ahead for Mattel's 'Galactica' Toys

Galactica isn't dead, not at all," says Jack Fox of Mattel Toys. "The line was introduced at the Toy Fair in February 1978, and it has sold extremely well." He says his company expects the line to continue making good profits despite the show's cancellation.

"Canceled, yes," says Fox, "but it's still around in reruns—and doing well in the ratings. And there's the new movie coming out in the fall; and I understand there are plans for more *Galactica* on television." Whatever the show's future, Fox believes, its past success is enough to guarantee interest among the youngsters for some time to come.

Mattel's licensing arrangements with Universal Studios dates back to early 1977, when *Galactica* was still on the drawing boards. As designs, characters and toy possibilities were uncovered by Universal, the Mattel people went to work on them.

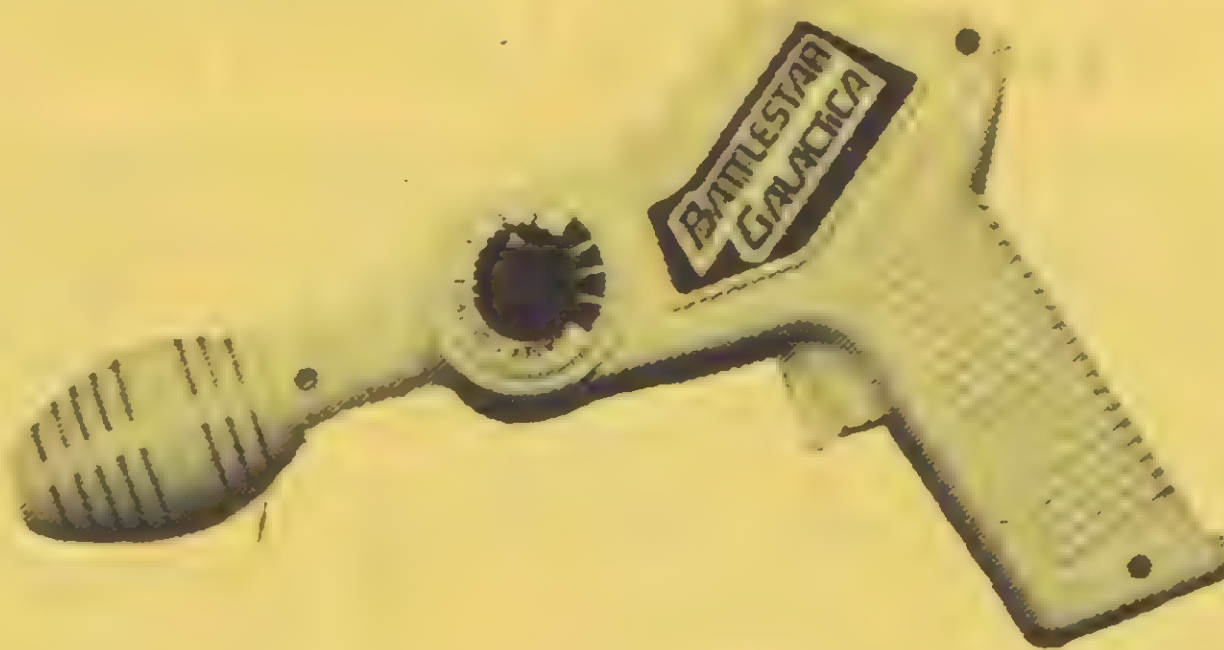
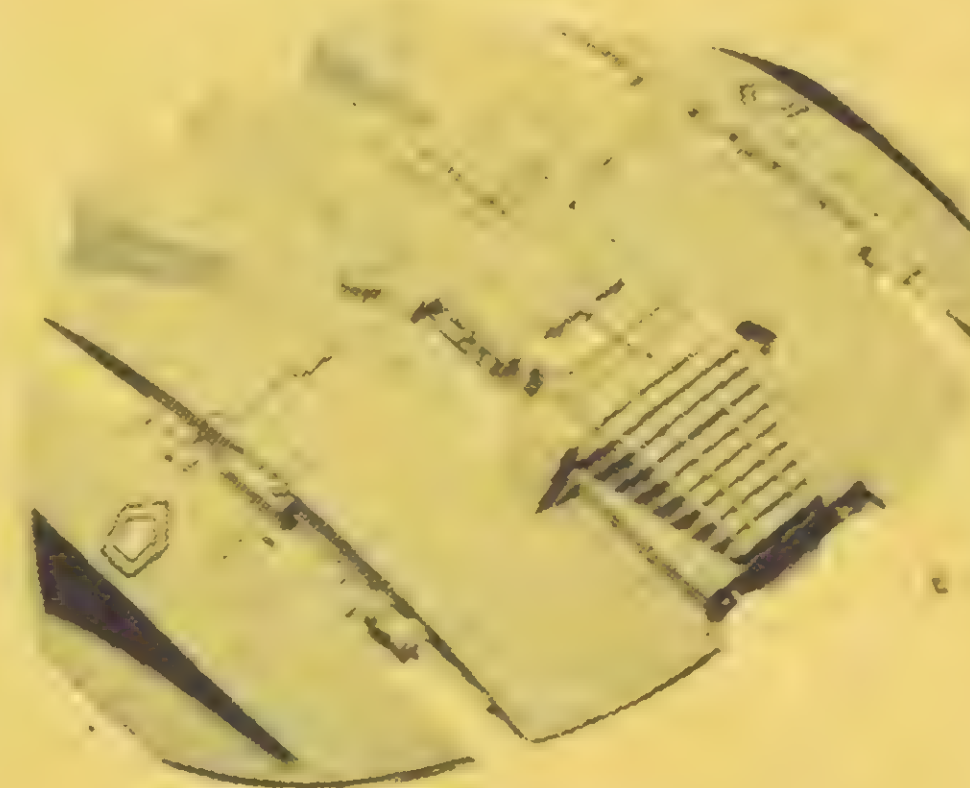
The initial line of toys (which were ready long before the show aired) included 12½-inch "action figures" of a Colonial Warrior and a Cylon, a Viper launch station with two small Vipers, and various ground-running vehicles designed as Vipers, Cylon ships and other items less "pure" in their *Galactica* derivation.

Even as the show was slipping in the ratings, Mattel added to its line a batch of smaller figures: an Ovion, a Daggit, Commander Adama, Lt. Starbuck and the Imperious Leader. Around the same time, a teddy-bear-sized Daggit, that makes Daggit sounds when you pull a string, was introduced.

Plans to release a large-scale replica of the *Galactica* itself, however, have now been scrapped.

"This was due more to the cost of the thing than to the cancellation of the show," Jack Fox believes. The model was to have been electronic—capable of making acceleration and laser-shot sounds—and would have cost around \$50. In addition to the risky high price, there was a shortage of computer chips available for manufacture. The chip supply was directed toward the manufacture of a *Galactica* laser pistol which makes a variety of noises. Another rather complicated toy, recently available, is the *Galactica* Vertibird—for which the Viper design has become a helicopter that the operator aims at Cylon Raider chipboards.

Fox predicts no shortage of *Galactica* toys from Mattel, nor does he predict a waning of interest at the toy counters.



THE MAGNIFICENT WARRIORS

(November 12, 1978)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Chris Nyby.

Guest Cast: Brett Somers (Siress Belloby), Barry Nelson (Bogan), Eric Server (Dipper), Dennis Fimple (Duggy).

When a food crisis threatens starvation, Adama finds he must rekindle an old flame with a woman who has the equipment the farmers on the rural planet of Serenity will trade grain for. However, the farmers steal the equipment and con Starbuck into the short-lived occupation of sheriff. It appears that a band of pig-like creatures called Borays have killed all the previous sheriffs.



PHOTO: © ABC-TV

Starbuck and Apollo prepare to attack the "Gun on Ice Planet Zero."

THE YOUNG LORDS

(November 19, 1978)

Writers: Don Bellisario, Frank Lupo



PHOTO: © ABC-TV

Adama tells his grandson a story while Apollo is away in "The Lost Warrior."

and Paul Playdon. Director: Don Bellisario.

Guest Cast: Bruce Glover (Megan), Charles Bloom (Kyle), Audrey Landers (Miri), Brigitte Muller (Ariadne), Adam Man (Nilz).

After crash-landing on the planet Trillion, Starbuck is rescued by a band of children who intend to trade him to the Cylons who are holding their father captive.

THE LIVING LEGEND

(Part 1—November 26, 1978; Part 2—December 3, 1978)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Vince Edwards.

Guest Cast: Lloyd Bridges (Cain), Rod Haase (Tolan), Junero Jennings (Launch officer on the "Pegasus").

Apollo and Starbuck encounter the lost battlestar *Pegasus*, under the command of the legendary military leader Cain. Cain insists that the battlestars join forces and attack the Cylon base on Gamoray, but Adama is sure that it is a suicidal idea. Cain, however, is obsessed with the idea and takes steps to force Adama into agreeing with his plan. While a team of paratroopers make a surprise attack on the Gamoray base, Commander Cain attacks Baltar's basestar fleet with the *Pegasus*.

FIRE IN SPACE

(December 17, 1978)

Writers: Jim Carlson and Terrence McDonnell. Director: Chris Nyby. Guest Cast: William Bryant (Fireleader), Jeff MacKay (Crewman).

A Cylon kamikaze attack leaves Adama critically injured as a fire spreads throughout the giant battlestar. Boomer, Athena and Boxey are trapped between the walls of flame; only Muffit, the mechanical daggit, can lead the firefighters to their rescue.

WAR OF THE GODS

(Part 1—January 14, 1979; Part 2—January 21, 1979)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Dan Haller

Guest Cast: Patrick Macnee (Count Iblis), Kirk Alyn (Old Man), Bruce Wright (Guard), Paul Coufos (Pilot), John Williams (Statesman).

The *Galactica* and her fleet are besieged by spheres of glowing light that whip around the moving spacecraft. At the same time, a squadron of Viper pilots vanish from the *Galactica's* screens as if they never existed. Apollo



Cassiopeia and Sheba.

leads a mission to find the pilots. With Starbuck and Sheba, he follows a trail that leads him to a battle-scarred planet. There the trio comes upon the wreckage of a vast spacecraft, but before they can explore the wreck, they are confronted by the mysterious Count Iblis. The alien is taken back to the battlestar where his charismatic powers win over the trust of most of the fleet, eventually usurping Adama's command. Adama, in turn, demands a test of Iblis' power. The would-be messiah delivers Baltar into the hands of the Council of Twelve. However, Adama soon learns the true identity of the malevolent Count before a life-and-death struggle begins between the mortals and the Prince of Darkness.

THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES

(January 28, 1979)

Writer: Don Bellisario. Director: Rod Holcomb.

Guest Cast: Fred Astaire (Chameleon), Anne Jeffreys (Siress Blassie), Lance LeGault (Maga), Robert Feero (Bora), Anthony DeLongis (Taba), Dan Barton (Crewman).

To escape from bloodthirsty Borellians, an aging con man named Chameleon seeks sanctuary aboard the *Galactica* by convincing Starbuck that he is the Viper pilot's long-lost father. While tests continue aboard the battlestar to confirm the story, the Borellians gain access to the *Galactica* by joining the Viper pilot training program. Starbuck's life is put on the line as he tries to protect Chameleon from the killers, while an ever-deepening affection grows between the surrogate father and son.

"Galactica" Glossary

AGRO PARTS—Items used by farmers

AMGROSA—Scotch-type drink, delicious, rare and very valuable. *Note: Do not pronounce "Ambrosia"*

ASTRALONS—Meteor-like substances damaging to starships

BATTLESTAR—Immense fighter ship; a spatial aircraft carrier and battleship combined

COLONY—Planet

CONSUMABLES—Cylon word for food

CRAWLON—Spider

CRYOGENIC SUSPENSION—Process of freezing humans in cryogen tubes until source of their infection can be determined

CUBIT—Gold coin, used for money

DECONTAMINATION—Process which all pilots must undergo on returning from a space mission

DI-ETHENE—Noxious gas in the atmosphere of the ice planet with the Ravashol pulsar.

EDICT OF EXTERMINATION—Cylon's commitment to eradicate the humanoids

FUMARELLO—Cigar

GOLDEN CLUSTER—Humans' highest battle award

GROG—Rum-like beverage

HYDRONIC MUSHIES—Very tasty health food

INSTRUCTIONAL PERIOD—School



Young Boxey is attacked by the Ovions, minions of the Cylons.



Maren Jensen stars as Adama's daughter, Athena.

K BISCUIT—Snack food

KLAXON—Siren or warning bell

LANDRAM—Transport vehicle used on surfaces

LASER GENERATORS—Starship mechanism that fires the lasers

LUPUS—Wolf-like animal

MAGNETIC SEA (OR ABYSS)—Endless black void in space

MINE—Hive-like structures on Carillon where Chosen Creatures extract tylium

NUMO—Compressed air gun, ineffective except for short-distance shooting

OVINES—Sheep-like animals

PERFECT PYRAMID—Probably like a royal flush; i.e. a winning hand at cards

PLUTON—Poisonous substance generated from fallout of neutron elements which contaminates food

PRIMARIES—Basic, healthy food

PULSAR—(Also known as ultimate weapon, ravashol laser) Located on the asteroid Arcta, invented by Dr. Ravashol, originally to communicate across the galaxy. In Cylon hands, converted to the most powerful weapon in the star system.

SEAL—Marry (used interchangeably)

SIMULATOR—Control Room aboard the Galactica where pilots train in simulated viper cockpits

SOCIALATOR—A great date

SOLIUM—Liquid substance used to propel vehicles

SOLEHITE—Powerful explosive

BOOK OF STRATEGY—Fighter pilots' manual

SNOW RAM—Land vehicle for use on sub-zero planets

TOP PRIORITY SCRAMBLED CODE—Method of relaying messages from space vehicles back to Galactica

TRANSMISSION—Any radio or TV signal

TULIPIAN BUDS—A side dish

TYLIUM—Volatile, valuable resource mined on Carillon

VALCRON—Simple, cotton-type material used for curtains, etc.

VAPOR POINT—Point at which any element vaporizes

WEAPONS—Turbolaser—Viper weapon

Laser—Holstered gun, fires blast of light

Short-spans, Comas, Brain Crystals—Chemical weapons, usually encapsulated, which produce result suggested by their names

WORSHIP OF THE SUNSTORM—Gemonese religious ceremony noted for physical contact between genders

WARBOOK—Visual reference library of all characteristics of enemy warships



Cylon Basestars over Caprica.

Expressions

Cut through the feldergarb—Eliminate the bull

Frack—an expletive

Sniff plant vapors—Similar to "take drugs"

By your leave—Cylon response to Imperious Leader commands

Scare the pogeas out of—Frighten

Jar my chips—Shake me up

For Sagan's sake—For God's sake

Eating ion vapors—Eating the dust of a passing fighter plane

MURDER ON THE RISING STAR

(February 18, 1979)

Writers: Don Bellisario, James Carlson and Terrance McDonnell. From a story by Michael Sloan. Director: Rod Holcomb.

Guest Cast: Frank Ashmore (Ortega), Luman Ward (Pallon), Brock Peters (Solon), Patricia Stich (Zara), W.K. Stratton (Barton).

Starbuck's life is on trial as his arch rival, Ortega, is found slain after a heated game of Triad which erupted into a brawl between Starbuck and the unsportsmanlike Ortega. Apollo believes that despite the overwhelming evidence, his longtime mate is not guilty and he sets out to discover who really killed Ortega.

GREETINGS FROM EARTH

(2-hour special—February 25, 1979)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Ahmet Lateef.



Starbuck fights off advancing Cylons below the surface of Carillon.

Guest Cast: Randy Mantooth (Michael), Bobby Van (Hector), Ray Bolger (Vector), Kelly Harmon (Sarah), Lloyd Bochner (Leiter), Murray Matheson (Geller).

Apollo and Starbuck intercept a primitive spacecraft that contains two adults and four children in a state of suspended animation. When the spacecraft is taken aboard and is

believed to be from Earth, the Council of Twelve overrides Adama's power and demands that Dr. Wilker and Dr. Salik release the aliens from their sleep. However, when the aliens regain consciousness, it becomes evident that they cannot survive in the *Galactica's* atmosphere. While the entire population becomes riotous in their demand for information from the passengers, Adama enlists the aid of Apollo, Starbuck and Cassiopea to help them escape. The trio escorts the alien to their original destination, the planet Paradeen. Arriving at the alien's new home, they meet the android caretakers, Hector and Vector. The colonials discover that the aliens are from the planet Terra, part of which is enslaved by the dreaded Eastern Alliance, the ones responsible for destroying the majority of the population on Paradeen. Unknown to the intergalactic assemblage, an Eastern Alliance spacecraft is in pursuit of the aliens Apollo and the others have befriended.

Galactica's 4-Color Cosmos

Though network executives may have pronounced it dead some months ago, *Battlestar Galactica* may continue to sail the spaceways indefinitely—but only if the army of Galacticans who have made Marvel's *Battlestar Galactica* comic magazine a success continue to show their loyalty at the newsstands.

"Sales have been holding steady so far," says Jim Shooter, editor-in-chief of the Marvel line, "but the theatrical movie and the television repeats have continued to promote the book. Later, if sales do fall off, it won't be up to the editors to decide to continue the book. Our bottom line is whether a book is good or not. Our business people are the ones to worry over whether a tie-in is justifying licensing costs with sales."

In some ways, Shooter feels that the post-television *Galactica* could make an even better comic, as Universal might then loosen its control over the characters.

"For instance, in an early episode Baltar, who has betrayed his fellow humans to the Cylons, is apparently killed—and later appears unharmed, with no explanation. The *logical* explanation is that the Cylons rebuilt him with spare Cylon parts; that he's now half-Cylon, half-human. But that would be a basic change in a major character, and Universal would never approve it while there's a chance that the series might continue."

After beginning the comic series with some direct adaptations from the TV show, Marvel's editors surprised Universal by striking out on their own with all-new adventures. By introducing a mechanical genius named Shadrak, Marvel has equipped the entire ragtag fleet with light drive. The comic version of *Galactica* can stress space opera—and downplay the soap opera elements of the series, which were often used as an attempt to appeal to a wider television audience.



BALTAR'S ESCAPE

(March 11, 1979)

Writer: Don Bellisario. Director: Rick Kolbe.

Guest Cast: Ina Bolin (Siress Tinia), Lloyd Bochner (Leiter), Lance LeGault (Maga), Robert Feero (Bora), Anthony DeLongis (Tab), John Hoyt (Dombra).

While Adama must endure the presence and interference of council representative Siress Tinia on the bridge, Baltar plans to incite a prison break with the aid of the Alliance Enforcers and the Borellians. To save the fleet, Adama surrenders to Baltar, who demands that his Cylon fighter and its crew are made ready for liftoff, along with the Alliance craft. The Alliance Enforcers escape in their craft, but Apollo and Starbuck must discover a way to rescue Adama from Baltar.

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EXPERIMENT IN TERRA

(March 18, 1979)

Writer: Glen A. Larson. Director: Rod Holcomb.

Guest Cast: Edward Mulhare (John), Melody Anderson (Brenda), Nehemiah Persoff (Supreme Commander), Ken Swofford (Max).

Apollo and Starbuck catch up with the escaping Eastern Alliance craft and follow it back to Terra. But before they can make contact with the planet, they are plucked out of space by the same super-race that helped them defeat Count Iblis. The alien's representative, John, asks them to help him prevent a war that will affect them all. Apollo is sent down to the planet, assumes the identity of a Terran astronaut, and must somehow stop the war that will wipe out both sides.

TAKE THE CELESTRA

(April 1, 1979)

Writers: Jim Carlson and Terrence McDonnell. Director: Dan Haller.

Guest Cast: Ana Alicia (Aurora), Paul Fix (Kronus), Nick Holt (Charka), Ran-

dy Stumpf (Damon), Richard Styles (Hermes).

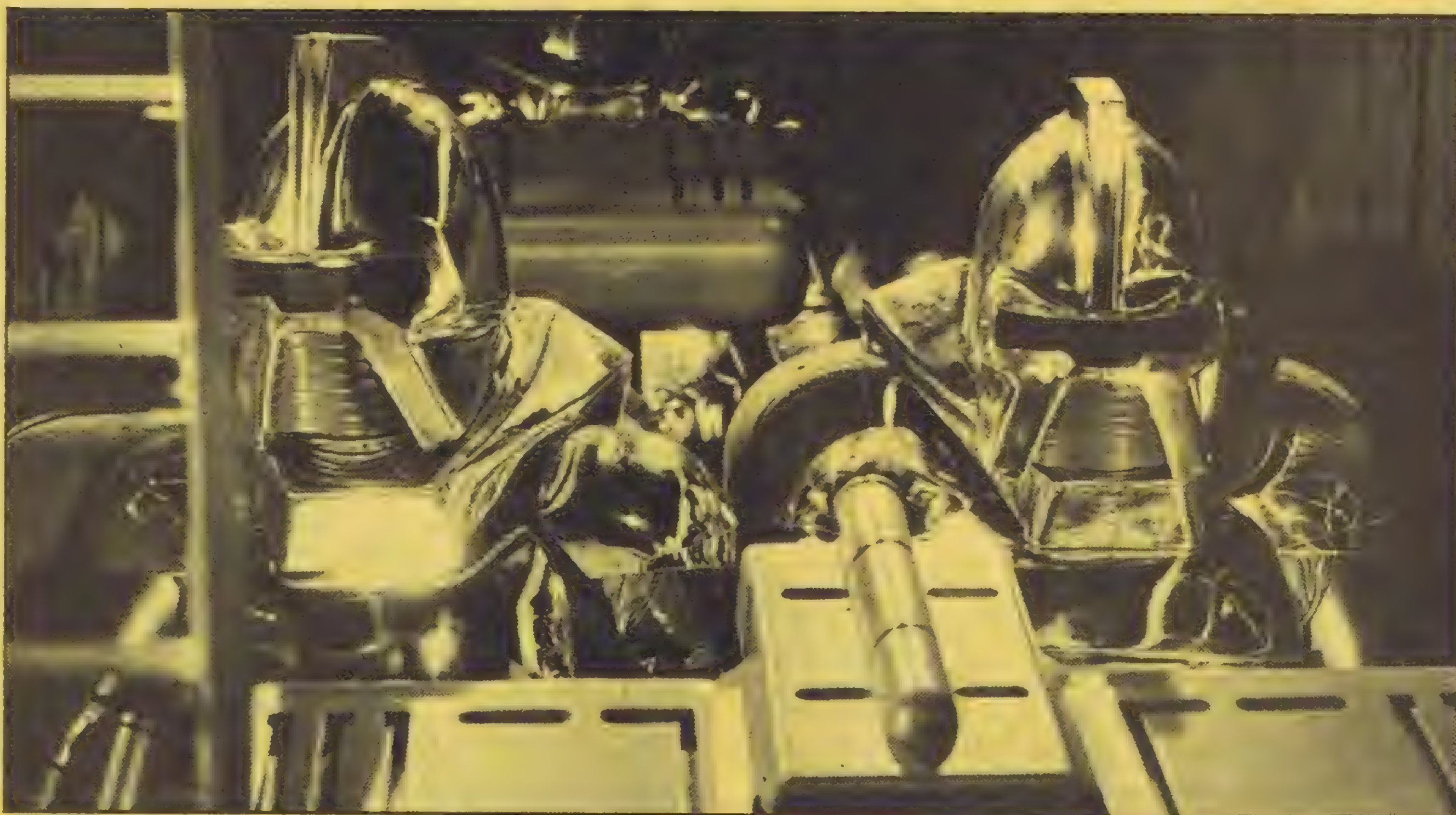
When Starbuck enlists Apollo's aid in helping him win back the affections of his long-lost love, Aurora, they become involved in a power struggle between Kronus, the iron-fisted commander of the Celestra, a power-hungry junior officer, and the Celestra's mutinous freedom fighting crew who want to remove the commander from power.

THE HAND OF GOD

(April 29, 1979)

Writer and Director: Don Bellisario.

Weary of running from their encounters with the relentless Cylons, Adama and his crew choose to take on their enemy's basestar which a long-range patrol has discovered nearby. Their only hope of success is that Starbuck and Apollo can sneak aboard the enemy ship and blind its scanners. Using Baltar's captured ship, the duo make their bid at an impossible task which may prove to be their last mission. ★



Cylon fighter pilots bare down on the Battlestar Galactica.

Vehicles

RAGTAG FLEET—Vehicles carrying surviving humans away from Cylons

TRANS-STELLAR SPACE SERVICE—Spaceship

GEMONI FREIGHT—Immense passenger vehicle

ALPHA SHUTTLE & STARLINER—Transport ships

TAURON BUS LINES—Small space trams

RISING STAR—Luxury liner with Astral Restaurant

SANITATION SHIP—Space-age garbage truck

Also—Intergalactic passenger liners, freighters, tankers, buses, air taxis, troop carriers, ships of burden

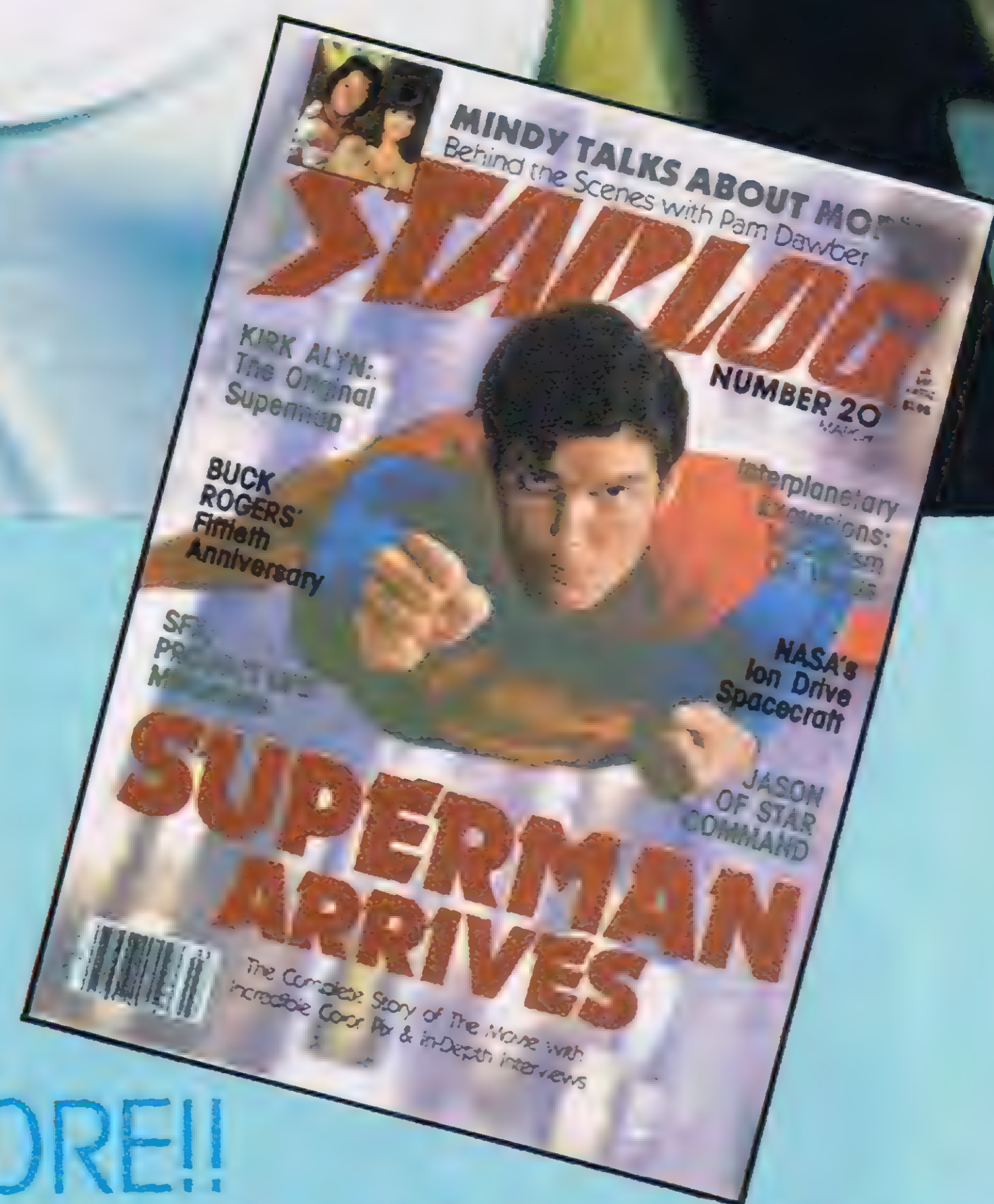
GALACTICA—Super-speed carrier/battleship, sole surviving battleship of colonies

COLONIAL VIPERS—Single seater fighter planes capable of exceeding light speed

MINERAL SHIPS—Landram party (landing party) ships on Carillon

RECON VIPER—Superspeed, unarmed, inter-stellar exploration ship equipped with audio activated computer named CORA

SHUTTLE—Sub-light vehicle used to transport people or equipment



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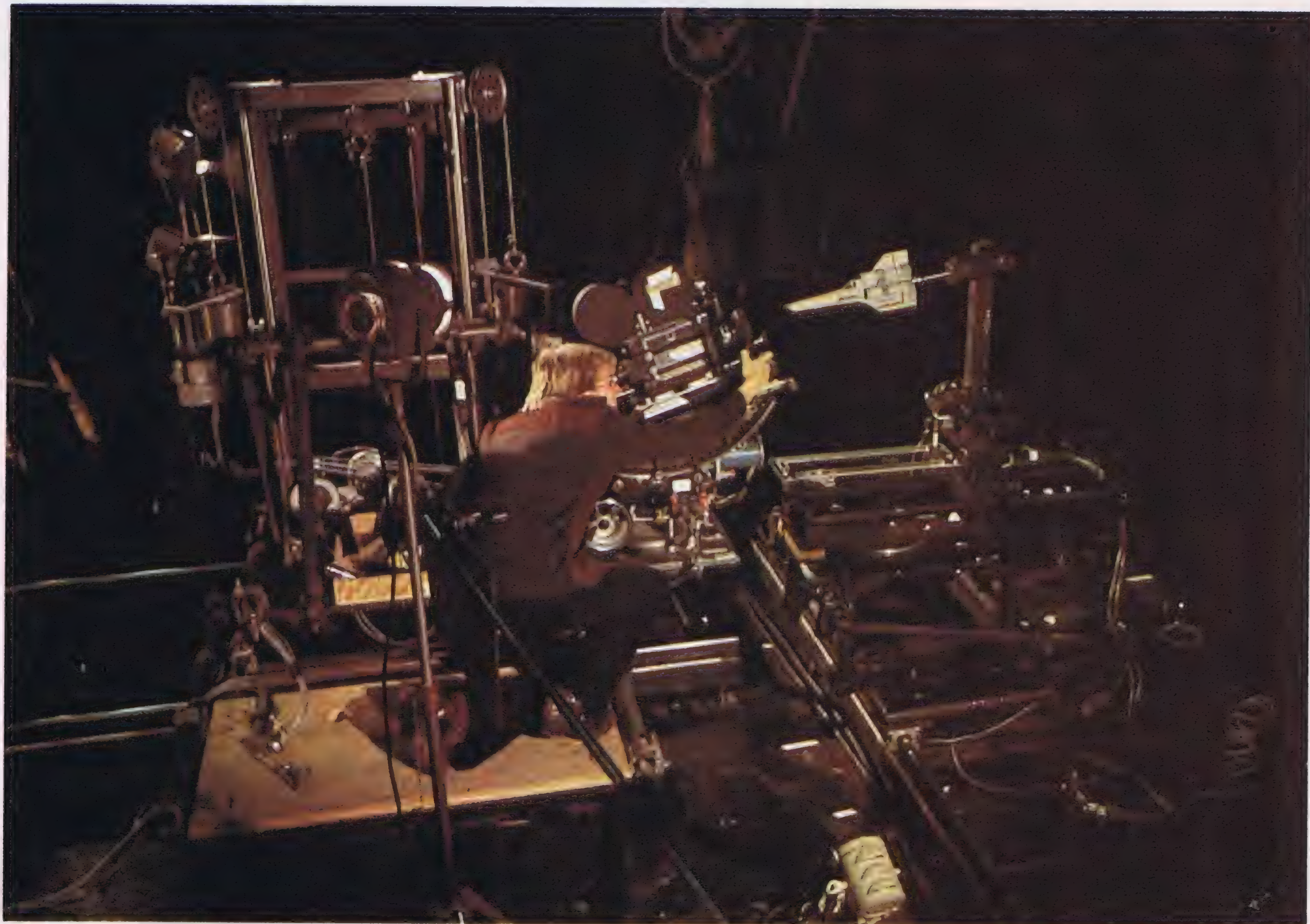
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PHOTOS: © 1979 UNIVERSAL

Cameraman David Hardburger shooting a *Battlestar Galactica* Viper on the motion-control rig at Universal's Hartland facility.

(continued from page 34)

on the design approach, even started to work on models. But the network didn't go for the script. They canned it. We, in turn, had to totally shut down and let our whole crew go—the whole model shop we had begun to train. This was right at Christmas 1977.”

Smith and Garber were still on the Universal payroll, but they had to let all but eight of their employees go. “We were still down there at the Marina [the Glencoe plant]—doing nothing, just waiting,” says Smith.

Garber: “Along about the end of February, in 1978, we got a new *Buck Rogers* script—the Leslie Stevens/Glen Larson script.” This was essentially the script audiences saw in the theatrical film, but at the time, the show was scheduled as a TV pilot.

Smith: “Then we had to hire a new crew, set up a new model shop and start again.”

Designs for the *Buck Rogers* spaceships came from many sources, some of them unlikely. “One design,” says Garber, “came from a design Ralph McQuarrie had sketched out for *Galactica*. This was Buck's Thunderfighter. David Jones, head of our design department, took McQuarrie's sketch and pushed it around a bit, and came up with what we actually used. Colin Cantwell came up with the design for the Pirate Fighter.” McQuarrie did that wonderful and ubiquitous *Star Wars* preproduction art; Cantwell was a model designer for *Star Wars*.

“The idea for the Draconian ship,” Garber continues, “came to us from the

Universal lot. The producers had a fellow in their design department do some sketches, and Dave Jones worked them into a firm design. Dave designed most of the other ships as well.

“In late March or early April we finally got started. This was theoretically for an air-date in September, on NBC. Also at this time our lease was running out at Glencoe, and we couldn't get any more extensions beyond July. John Dykstra was facing the same prob-

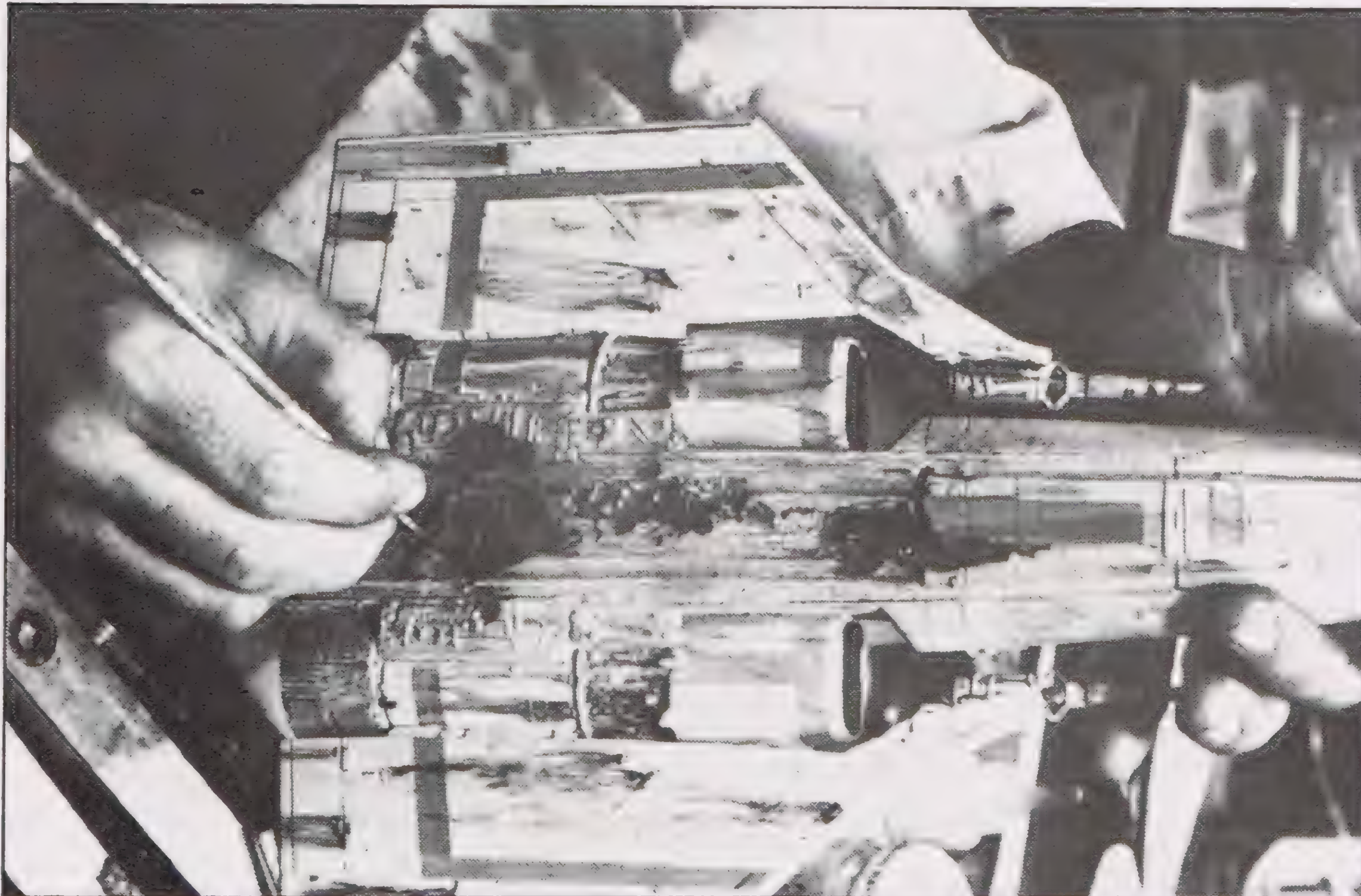
lems at his Apogee plant. It seemed certain that both Dykstra and his *Galactica* crew and we with our *Buck Rogers* people would have to share a Universal facility.

“We moved in here [at the Universal-Hartland plant] in late August of 1978—at around the time John Dykstra decided to pull out of *Galactica*,” explains Garber.

Smith: “We didn't know who was going to show up for work from one day to the next.”

Garber: “There was some rivalry, competi-

The searing gash of a laser blast is added to the bottom of a Viper model.





Bob Bailey, Bud Elam and Alex Funk are wiring the "Galactica" for the "Fire in Space" effect. A Cylon attack starts a raging inferno in the *Galactica*.



David Garber in his office. "Friends" polka-dotted his wall recently while he was away on vacation.

tion, among the special-effects teams—which is a good thing, really. We had meetings on how we were going to bring the two teams together harmoniously. It was fun. There were really some exciting times around here!" Dykstra's crew expected to take a dominant role. "Dykstra and his people had the huge success of *Star Wars* behind them, and they were in the process of pulling off *Galactica*. They had a lot of leverage, which is understandable."

"Dykstra felt he should be given the equipment Universal had bought for *Galactica*, but Universal said that what they bought would remain here at Hartland. And at about that time, Dykstra's deal was solidifying at Columbia [to produce Paddy Chayevsky's *Altered States*; this deal ultimately fell through], so he and his people pulled out of *Galactica* and left it to us. Suddenly we were

looking at air dates for *Galactica*—with almost no equipment and no time to spare."

Smith: "That's when *Buck Rogers* was pulled back. It just had to be, or we could never have turned out effects for *Galactica*. Luckily, NBC still had not decided on an air date; and for once, their indecision helped us a lot."

Garber: "*Buck* did suffer for a few months while we worked on *Galactica*."

Smith: "John Dykstra shipped the models to us, and everyone here was just wandering around for a week."

Garber: "Only the first three-hour pilot show had been fully completed by Dykstra. Another show, a two-parter, 'The Lost Planet of the Gods,' was partially done, and there was some work done on the snow planet, for the air date of our first episode was closing in very quickly."

"We were in here trying to set up our optical printers [on which the various photographic elements of a special-effects

shot are combined] while workmen were putting the ceiling up in the optical department. Optical is supposed to be the most clean and secure area; and here we were with dust and stuff falling down on us. We had no filters. Our air system wasn't working yet. We were getting all sorts of strange things on our film. At the beginning, all our composites were no good. And we were still trying to pump the shots through. It was pretty scary for a while. That's the way it went through September and October."

Smith: "We lost probably 80 percent of the *Galactica* crew that had stayed with us from Dykstra's group, within the first month. And we must have lost 20 percent of our own crew. There was a large turnover during that first month while folks settled down and found out what they wanted to do."

Garber: "That made matters much worse, but it was good, in the long run, in the sense that now there wouldn't be two factions trying to get along. It gave us the advantage of setting up a single work force for both shows. We could have worked out the differences, though. John Dykstra, Bob Shepherd [production manager for Dykstra] and Wayne and I have always been good friends."

"Our biggest problem with *Galactica* was that the scripts came so late! Two weeks before shooting was normal. They were in such a hurry because Universal needed a lot of our material for front projection or rear-projection process work on the stage. Universal shoots an hour show in six days. There's no getting around it. If they needed something, they had to have it on time."

In spite of the panic—which never really let up—there were occasions for satisfaction and pride.

Garber: "When we got the Lightship built...it really looked super. It was for the episode called 'War of the Gods.' Great show. It was particularly interesting because it was one of the few episodes that really stretched the *Galactica* concept a bit."

(continued on page 63)



Pat McClung, model maker, at work on the *Draconia*.

SPACE REPORT

EDITED BY DAVID HIRSCH

From the Mailbag . . .



Brian Johnson and Cyril Foster retouch models before shooting.

... I would like to know how they "dirty a ship down," like the Eagles. I am going to make a movie and I want my model to look as realistic as possible.

Phillip Heide
Pomeroy, IA

"Dirtying down" is a highly skilled job, but the principles are extremely simple. A brand new airliner towed from the Boeing factory has a model look because it is totally unmarked and unlike aircraft that have been flying for some time. However, within a few thousand hours of flying, the tires become worn, oil marks develop on the flaps, the cowlings go sooty as they're continually blasted with hot air from jets, paint is chipped and, generally, the aircraft looks as if it has been used. Follow the same concept of visualizing a used craft and you will have "dirtied it down."

... Weeks before the release of *Space: 1999*, what were your feelings about the series? Did you think it would be a hit?

James Krenek
Crockett, TX

In these days of science-fiction movies with astronomical budgets, a lot of the technical problems have been cracked on how to present science fiction on film. But the first series of *Space: 1999* was made before the advent of

Star Wars and when I realized what we had undertaken to deliver, not for a big cinema budget, but for a television budget, I can tell you I felt pretty sick.

Yes, I did think it would be a hit. After all, I really would have had no right to have made it if I had believed that I was going to spend an enormous sum of money on a failure.

... The first season of *Space: 1999* had a good deal of excellent music which was not originally composed for the series. I know the "Mars, the Bringer of War" segment from Holst's *Planets Suite* was used in the episode "Space Brain," but what music was used in "Dragon's Domain" and "Testament of Arkadia"?

Mike Dudley
Calgary, Canada

The music used in "Dragon's Domain" was Adagio in G Minor by Albinoni and arranged by Alain Lombard. In "Testament of Arkadia," the music was from the Chappell library catalogue—Appassionata by Serge Lencen (CLP705A) and Picture of Autumn by Arel Dutour (DMM313A).

... What was the model of Moonbase Alpha built from and how long did it take Brian Johnson and his crew to build it?

Tod Ellsworth
Portsmouth, OH

As far as I can recall, Moonbase Alpha was constructed in six weeks and was made mainly of plaster which was set on a wooden base. The craters were created by dropping ball bearings into the plaster before it set. Finally, Fullers Earth was used to create the dusty looking surface. Small sections of front-projection material were stuck on the buildings which produced bright reflections when the set was lit, making it look as though the rooms were lighted from within.

FLASH!

"FIVE STAR FIVE" ON LAUNCH PAD

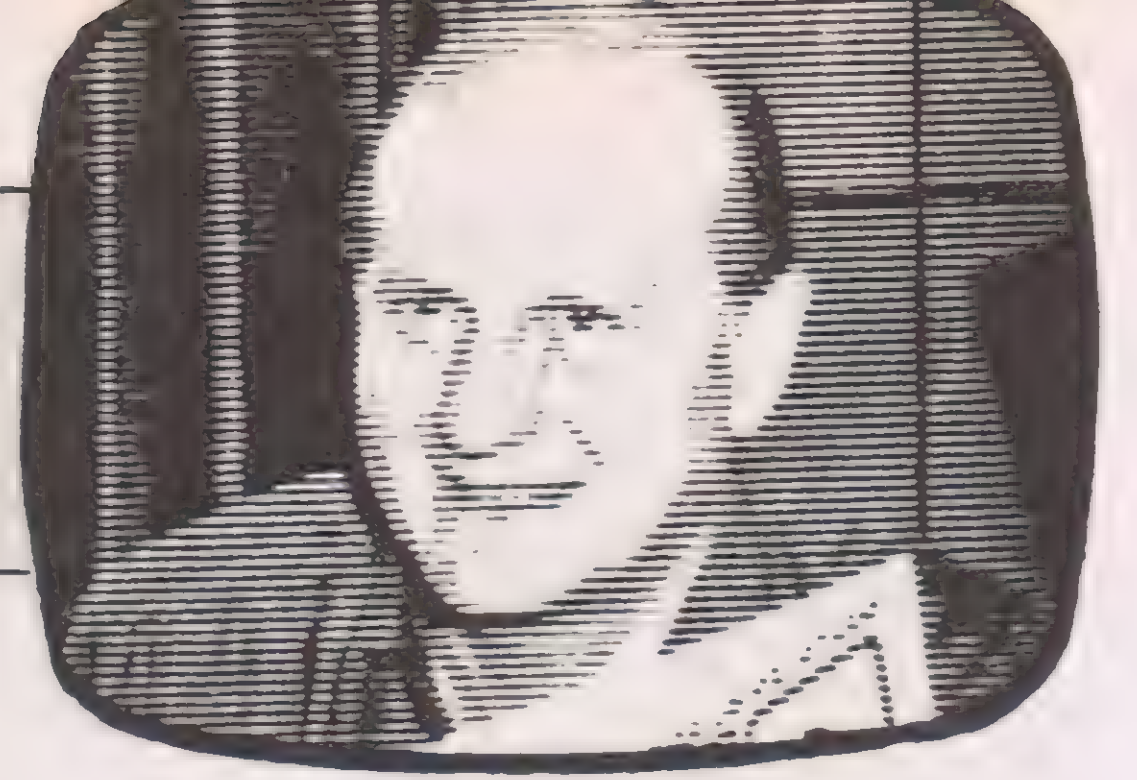
Principal photography commences this October at Pinewood Studios in England on Gerry Anderson's spectacular production of *Five Star Five*. This epic space adventure, co-produced with Sydney Rose, executive producer of the Who's *The Kids Are Alright*, is scripted by Gerry and Tony Barwick. Barwick himself has had a long association with Gerry, as he scripted episodes for *Thunderbirds*, *Captain Scarlet*, *UFO* and *Space: 1999*.

A shooting schedule of 17 weeks for live action and 20 additional weeks for special effects has been set up for the movie, budgeted at \$12 million. The movie is described by the filmmakers as "Where Eagles Dare in outer space—pure adventure entertainment with the emphasis on a central group of five unique characters, to be portrayed by major international stars."

Gerry Anderson and Sydney Rose are currently in the United States for preliminary casting in Los Angeles.

Five Star Five is scheduled for release during Christmas of 1980, in Panavision and stereo. Plans are already being made for worldwide merchandizing and publishing tie-ins, and Sydney Rose is planning a musical tie-in with a major record label.

More on *Five Star Five* next month!



Investigating the "Testament of Arkadia."



Nick Tate and friend, one of "The Bringers of Wonder."

... Could you tell me what Prentis Hancock has been doing since he left *Space: 1999*?

Shimane Oderkirk
Cedar Rapids, IA

Since Prentis left he has been very busy. Among the films he has appeared in are *The 39 Steps* and *The Nativity* (a TV movie for 20th Century-Fox); his television appearances include *Doctor Who* (in "Planet of Evil"), *Danger UXB*, *Armchair Theatre*, and he has just finished a new series of *Secret Army* for the BBC.

... Is Zienia Merton or Catherine Schell married?

Waverly Pierre
Beaumont, TX

Neither Zenia Merton nor Catherine Schell is married at the moment, albeit they have both had more proposals than I have had hot dinners!

... My parents recently went to Germany and upon their return they presented me with a book on *Space: 1999* written entirely in German. It was called "*Mondbasis Alpha 1*." Is this the name of the series in Germany? In the book, "Breakaway" was called "Die Katastrphe." I know it was "Breakaway" because of the pictures.

Steven Reder
Brookville, OH

The show in Germany entitled "Mondbasis

Alpha 1" is indeed *Space: 1999*. In Italy it's "Spazio 1999" and in Spain it's "Cosmos 1999." You are obviously sure that "Die Katastrphe" is the episode "Breakaway," which it is.

... I am wondering if Ron Grainer, the man who wrote the music for *The Prisoner*, and Barry Gray, the man who composed the scores for many of your productions, are the same person. The reason I ask is that in the premiere episode of *The Prisoner*, "Arrival," a short phrase is played that was used quite a bit in the "Mission of the Darians" episode of *Space: 1999*.

Kelvin Mead
Cutler Ridge, FLA

No, Kelvin, Ron Grainer and Barry Gray are two different people and I know them both extremely well. Ron now lives in a beautiful farmhouse in Portugal and Barry lives in Guernsey, one of a group of islands off the French Coast. Unfortunately, both men are part of what we call, in this country, "The Brain Drain." In other words, they have been so successful that they can no longer afford to live in England, for the tax man would be hounding them. Both are highly competent and professional musicians and one certainly would not copy the other.

I cannot recall the short phrase that you refer to, but sometimes on television we use a small amount of library music or even classical music for which the copyright has expired. It is possible that this might account for the similarity.

... I was very impressed by the two-part *Space: 1999* episode "The Bringers of Wonder." I found the monsters fascinating. I would like to know what they were made of and how they were operated.

David Guay
Plattsburgh, NY

I'm glad to hear that you enjoyed "The Bringers of Wonder." The monsters were mainly made from latex, but they were embedded with plastic tubing along which artificial blood was pumped to add greater realism. They also had a breathing mechanism to make them look alive. Finally, they were painted with grease to give them that slimy look. I can't understand why they haven't caught on as pets.

... Were special effects ever a problem in *Space: 1999*?

Richard Pelletier
Sunnyvale, CA

Always!

See you next month,

Gerry Anderson

Readers are invited to send their questions and topic ideas to Gerry in care of STARLOG. Although personal replies, requests for materials, etc. are impossible, letters of general interest will be selected for printing in future issues.

Gerry Anderson's Space Report
STARLOG Magazine
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An early glimpse into THE BLACK HOLE

BY DAVID HOUSTON

For the first time in history," says actor Joseph Bottoms, "the studio name won't appear above the title of the film."

"It won't say 'Walt Disney Presents!'" an assistant director concurs.

"That's not definite," corrects a Disney publicist among those in the dim corner of the enormous sound stage, "but it is being considered. It sure indicates a departure for Disney Studios, a change in its image, in its way of thinking."

They're talking about the most ambitious and costly movie project in the history of the company: Disney Productions' \$17.5 million science-fiction epic, *The Black Hole*.

"Imagine," quips a passing makeup artist, "a PG-rated Disney movie!"

Again the Disney publicist sets the record straight. "Well, of course, it isn't rated at all, yet. The point is that the studio won't alter the picture to insure a G rating. We're making this one for adults."

Disney for Adults

The casting of the film suggests this, too. You won't find Dean Jones, Don Knotts or

Julie Andrews around the lot these days. *The Black Hole* stars Maximilian Schell, Anthony Perkins, Robert Forster, Joseph Bottoms, Yvette Mimieux and Ernest Borgnine. And the script, everyone claims, has guts. We have to take their word for this; the *Black Hole* script is under heavier guard than the *Dead Sea Scrolls*.

Even without benefit of the printed story, however, quite a lot can be learned from a day spent on *Black Hole* stages, in the screening room viewing "dailies" from the day before, visiting the miniatures studios, matte department and robot workshops—and through some casual chats with actors and production people.

We visit the set on the next-to-last day of filming for the first unit (live action). We learn that the movie has been shot in sequence and that today's work involves pieces of an elaborate life-or-death escape. Joseph Bottoms, Yvette Mimieux and Robert Forster are on the set and in makeup. Ergo: these three survive the story—at least until the last few minutes. Anthony Perkins, Maximilian Schell and Ernest Borgnine are "no longer on the lot. Their work is finished."

In the footage shot the day before, we see part of this same rescue operation. The super-wide-screen image (2.35:1 ratio, 70mm "Technovision") is boiling red with steam, wind, reflections of fire. Clapboards identify the scene's place in *Black Hole*. Three dark figures dressed in futuristic fatigues climb up the outside of a cylindrical machine ("That's the probe ship they escape in," says someone in the dark of the screening room). The three are Mimieux, Bottoms and Forster. There is a peculiar unsteadiness to the shot, as if the unseen base of the probe ship is floating on water (hydraulic lifts, we later learn). On the top rung of the ladder, Bottoms loses his footing and floats upward, hanging on with both hands. He reels himself in and joins the other two at the ship's hatch. He loses his grip and tumbles, weightless, toward the camera (wires occasionally visible). There is another "take" of the same shot in which no wires show. Now there's a close-up on Mimieux and Forster reaching out, waiting to grab the astronaut when he returns. Bottoms swims back through the air...the two catch him...reel him in.

The End

The escape scene, we hear, is the climax of the climax. The monstrously large deep-space platform, *Cygnus*, has ventured too near a black hole and is literally being pulled apart by its forces. Those hoping to escape propel themselves, weightless, through twisting corridors where girders and trusses are warping and snapping all around.

Following the dailies of the escape maneuver, there is a brief contrastingly cool picture: the huge space platform drifting regally, silhouetted against a surprisingly bright blue starfield. That blue void, they tell us, is used throughout—as if the edge of the Milky Way always fills the field of view, or as if there are distortions and ubiquitous gas clouds in the vicinity of the black hole. Odd. If it works, it could add striking visual poetry; if it doesn't...

The spaceship defies description. One thinks more easily of the Krell labs in *Forbidden Planet* than of any previous movie spaceship. It looks like the Crystal Palace of the 1851 London Exposition—but there's no glass, only girders—a man-made world of girders.

Next—a visit to the stage where miniatures are being photographed, frame-by-frame, with the use of a computer-controlled animation set-up.

Right: One of Peter Ellenshaw's renderings of the *Cygnus* for *The Black Hole*. Below: This scene was shot the day prior to STARLOG's visit to the *Black Hole* set; it's the scene we saw in the dailies. At a last critical moment, toward the end of the picture, these three survivors crawl, jump, float and fly through the length of the mammoth *Cygnus*, which is being pulled apart by "tidal stress" as it approaches the black hole.



ART: 1979 WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS





There are two identical models of the big ship, each about five feet long. They mount on control bars differently, allowing for complete versatility of photo angles; and they serve as backup for each other, in case of breakage. When you see *The Black Hole*, don't look for identifiable bits from old plastic model kits. These original, extraordinarily pleasing ships are made of welded and soldered metal.

"We decided that deep space probes like these would have no skins at all," says an art-

ist there in the blackness where the *Cygnus* was being filmed... hence the oddly Victorian naked-metal-lace design.

Matting the "Hole"

In a better lit corner of the miniatures studio, a spry elderly man is at work on a large hexagonal painting on a piece of glass. The man is Peter Ellenshaw, one of the most famous artists in movie history, the man responsible for the visual magic of Disney's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Ellenshaw is

overall designer of *The Black Hole*.

The painting—which could hang in a museum—shows a view down a mile-long power shaft which is lined with trusses on all sides. On the bottom wall, there are rows of containers, tanks and tubes across which stretch catwalks. Taking one of those catwalks as an indication of scale, a person crossing one would be ant-sized relative to the size of the enclosure.

A box-like structure—the same height as the painting (about two meters)—is in Ellen-



shaw's way, giving him insufficient elbow room for painting. Curiosity leads us around to the far side of the structure. It turns out to be a detailed miniature of the very power shaft being painted by Ellenshaw. A camera is set up on tracks at the mouth of the model. We look through its viewfinder. Ellenshaw's painting exactly matches the lines of the model, extending the three-dimensional reality of the miniature set into infinity.

"See the catwalks in there?" our guide asks. "They're going to matte in people walk-

ing across them—during a dolly shot into the power shaft."

Again — perhaps unfairly — *Forbidden Planet*'s Krell pops into mind: the catwalks and the sheer magnitude of the image.

What's that about a *moving* matte shot? It has typically been considered possible but impractical to attempt a combination shot with the camera moving. There is just too much danger of wiggle between the two picture elements which are to appear as one.

"Have a look in the matte department," a man working on the miniatures suggests. "You ain't seen nothin' yet."

Just inside the matte department door, David Mattingly is at work on a large painting (on glass) of a vast botanic garden. Girders and trusses in the dim distance beyond the palm trees suggest that this landscape is *inside* a spaceship.

A sketch nearby shows a scene in the movie in which, apparently, the artificial gravity fails in the botanic garden: dirt, trees, plants, etc. are floating in the air!

The head of the matte department enters — Harrison Ellenshaw, Peter Ellenshaw's son.*

"There are 150 mattes in *The Black Hole*," he calculates. "We're going crazy here, and we still have quite a bit of work to do."

There is a painting in place for filming. It shows a multi-level control center with the movie's blue void and two huge planets in view beyond a dome-shaped window. There are also numerous "windows" in the paint-

* Ellenshaw Jr. changed his name recently from P.S. Ellenshaw to Harrison Ellenshaw—to avoid being confused with his father. See STARLOG #14 for a story on Harrison and the splendid mattes he did for *Star Wars*.

ing—where there is no paint, only clear glass. This matte will evidently have more than one live-action element combined with it.

"It has seven," the younger Ellenshaw confirms, "and the camera is in motion. Want to see a test of it?"

A screen is pulled down. The test script begins. Four performers converse in an elevator. The doors open. The camera follows the actors out into the widening vista of the control center. The cameras now pan upward to reveal the whole scene: people moving and working on numerous levels, lights flashing, workmen on cantilevered platforms which silhouette them against the bright planets outside. Seven live-action elements from seven sources combined with a painting as the camera makes complex moves!

"Spectacular!"—is quite an understatement when considering the effort.

A new computerized camera set-up makes this incredible shot possible. "Before we got our computers," explains one of the artists, "it was really a hit-or-miss proposition. It would take us days to do a single composite shot, and in about 60 percent of the cases, it would not work the first time and would have to be done over. And over."

Breaking Precedents

Now on to a sound stage where a shot in that final escape sequence is being set up. Actors at the makeup tables... directors instructing lighting men... stand-ins before the camera... a giant floodlight being lowered on ropes from a high scaffolding... two versions of a little robot being wheeled in... and lots of people just waiting around.

"It's been like this from the beginning,"

Left: Maximilian Schell as Dr. Hans Reinhardt with one of several operational classes of humanoid servants aboard his spacefaring world. Below: Chief matte painter Harrison Ellenshaw at work on a miniature section of the ship that will mate with live action.



PHOTOS: 1979 WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS



No. 1—Premiere Issue

Star Trek—Rare pix, complete episode guide, interviews. Bionic Woman. Space: 1999.



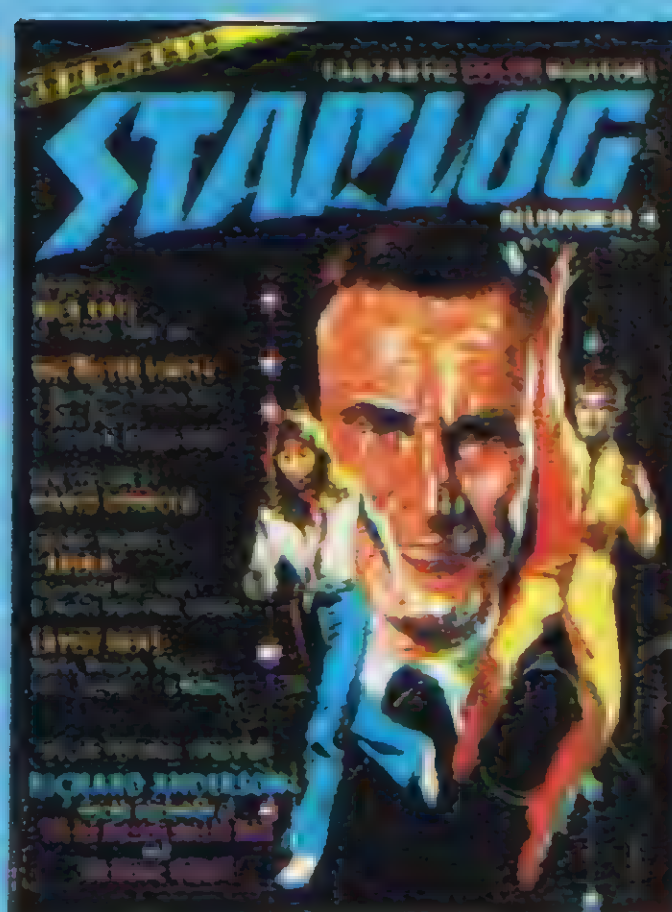
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Science Fiction Directory. History of 3-D Movies. UFO Episode Guide. Don Dixon Art.



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Special Effect: Part I. Heinlein on Destination Moon. Making of Fantastic Journey.



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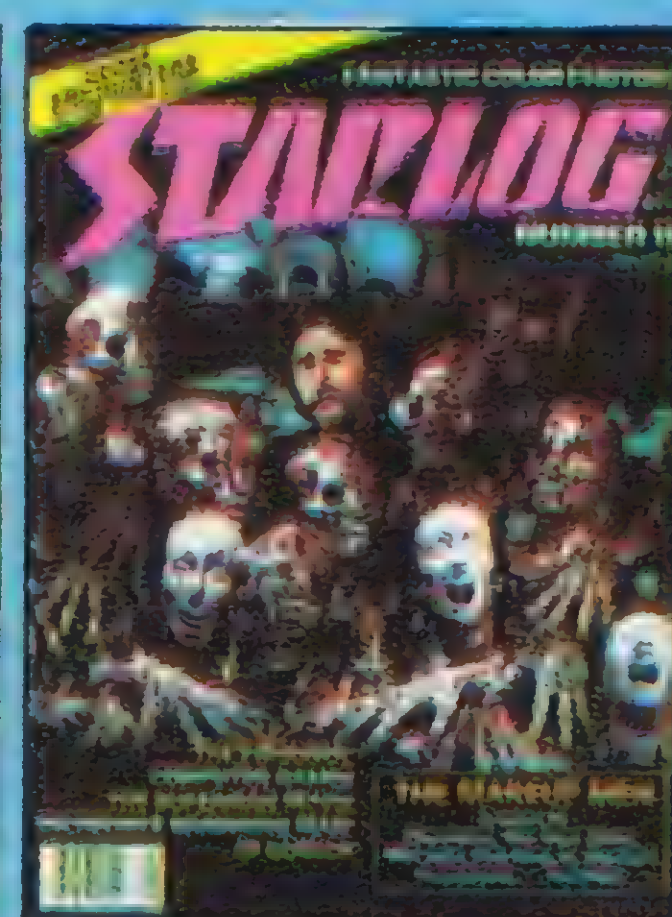
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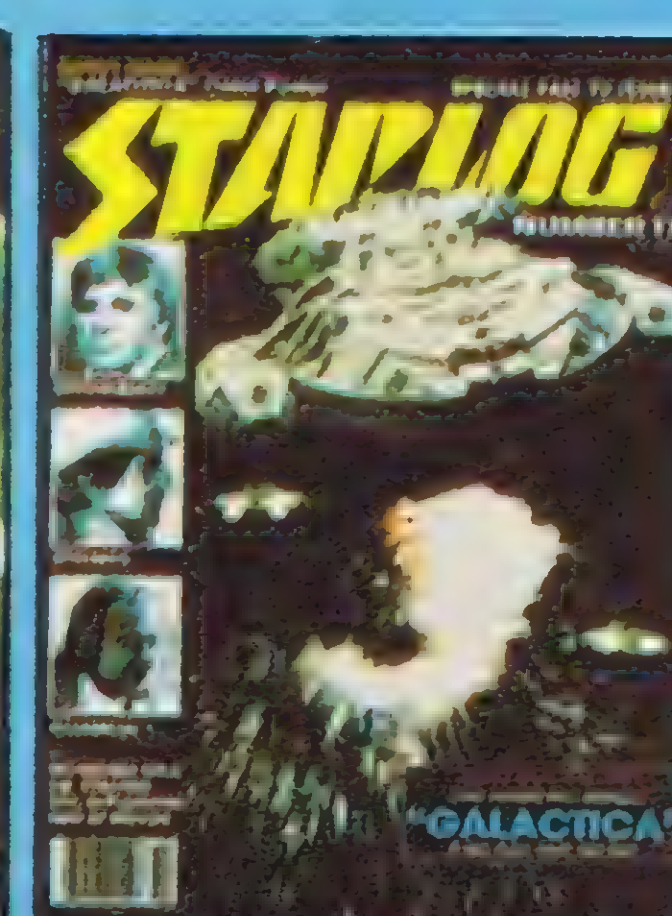
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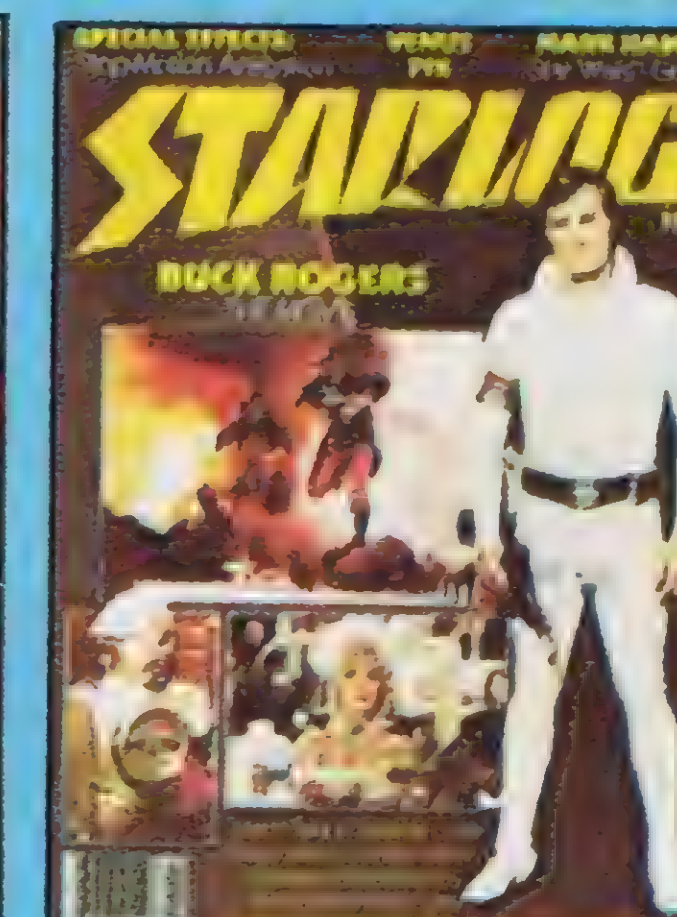
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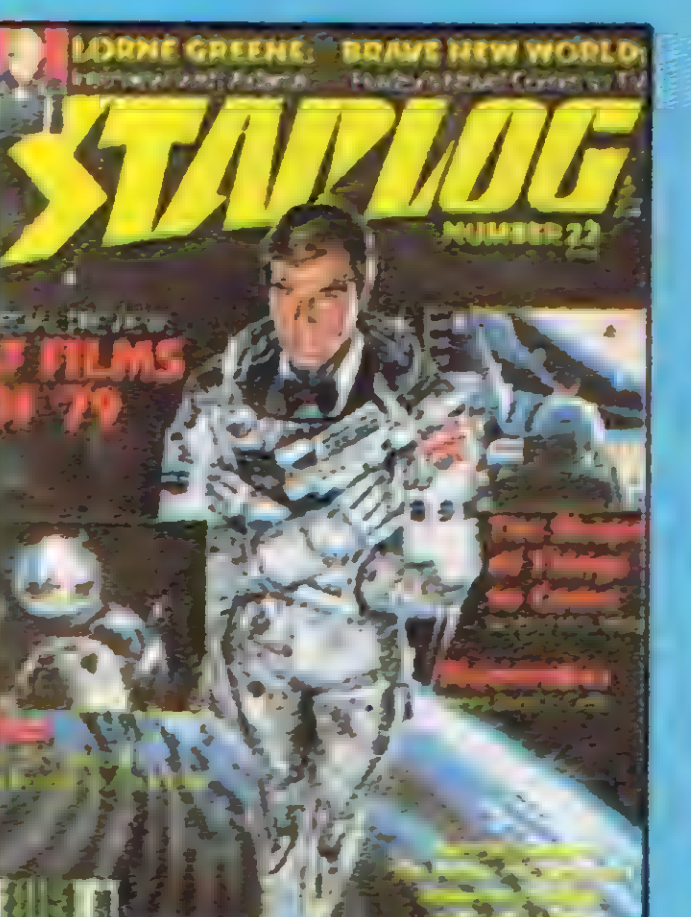
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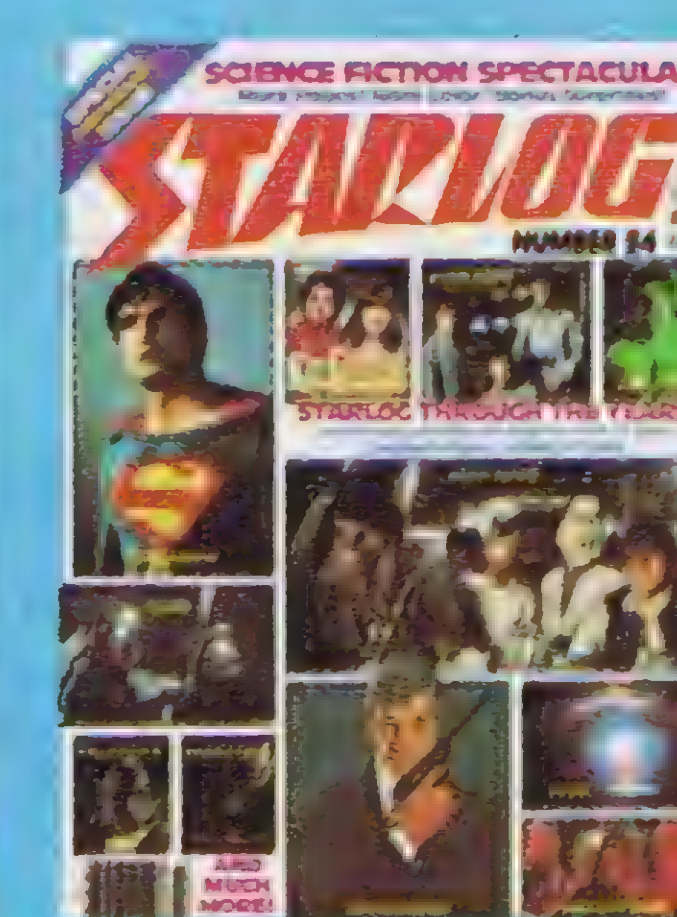
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says Chris Miller, one of the second assistant directors. "This movie is so sophisticated, so methodically done, that only the effects crews and cameramen stay busy." Chris is the son of Disney vice-president Ron Miller and has worked on other Disney features—*The North Avenue Irregulars*, *The Apple Dumpling Gang*, *Skytrap* (a TV movie that aired in May). "But I've never worked on a picture like *Black Hole*," he states flatly. "None of us have."

Marty Valinsky says, "You usually schedule a movie to shoot so many pages of script per day. We're doing well if we complete two-eighths or three-eighths of a page per day." Valinsky is Joseph Bottoms' stand-in, and at other times he plays one of the "humanoids" in the employ of quasi-bad guy Maximilian Schell. "I've played every kind of humanoid—from a soldier to a surgeon," he says.

Another of the small robots is wheeled by. It's about the size of R2-D2 but with more protrusions, two legs and big, painted-on Disneyesque eyes.

"There goes Vincent," says our guide. "There are Vincents all over the lot. They had to make a separate one for just about every action or movement he has to do."

Vincent, it would seem, is the robot sidekick of the character played by Joe Bottoms, a young astronaut who is fairly obviously the protagonist.

"Joe has a weird sense of humor," our guide contends. "A British journalist was here last week while they were filming Joe in a gimble [a vertical centrifuge like the command center set in *2001*]. When Joe got down out of it the British guy asked him, 'I say, were you enthusiastic about carnival rides as a boy? Bring back pleasant memories, does it?' And Joe said, 'Every time I get in this thing I throw up all over my uniform,' and then he walked away."

But today Joe Bottoms is in a more serious mood.

"I'm really sorry to see all this coming to an end," he says, thinking ahead to tomorrow, his last day of shooting. "It has really been like a big family get-together here; and I am very impressed with this movie. Can you believe it? They have storyboards for every single shot!"

"Disney is the one studio which has allowed itself to become truly expressive. And I think this will be their most important film since *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. In fact, there are parallels you can draw between *Black Hole* and *20,000 Leagues*. That's not bad, is it, to be compared to a Jules Verne classic?"

"*20,000 Leagues* first came out the year I was born, 1954. I saw it when I was about 12. I'll never forget it. All that about farming and mining the ocean floor... it was educational and at the same time it was wild and wonderful entertainment. That's what Disney has always done so well. Now we're doing the same thing with a scientific expedition into deep space.

"Another parallel—the character played by Maximilian Schell. He's much like Captain Nemo. Very much, now that I think of it; him with his big mean robot.

"There are other parallels. Other things I'm not going to tell you about. Like the ending. I'll say this: It will be big surprise. And it isn't just a fantasy. It's about us; about the Earth, about where we live."

"Max" & Other Characters

Maximilian Schell's "big, mean robot"—by unfortunate coincidence—is called Max (written that way before the role was cast). There seem to be almost as many Maxes standing around the set as there are Vincents. Max is indeed big and mean: roughly humanoid, reddish-black in color, bristling with weapons, with a bright red slit for an eye—which is reminiscent of *Galactica's* Cylons (which are reminiscent of Gort in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*).

An announcement spreads that the shot can't be filmed due to electronic problems with the instruments in the cockpit of the escape ship.

We now take a side trip to the robot workshop.

“... here we are,
flying, barreling
down this huge
twisting corridor,
with explosions
going off all around
us, things flying
and falling...”

An army of evil-looking robot warriors stand, sit, hang, lie everywhere. These are the humanoids—patterned after Max, with that same red Bakelite skin (actually the skin is made of various substances—foam rubber to vacuum-formed plastic). Some are rigged with explosive charges that will (or did) blow off a breast plate or limb. Some are rigid, some fully articulated for stunt men to wear. Imagination supplies a picture of Max leading a fearful charge of this formidable army.

Among the numerous incarnations of Vincent there stand versions of an oddly cute, oddly decrepit little robot that is surely to be taken as an earlier model of a Vincent. We hear the little fella called "Old Bob." He's beat up, with one leg missing—giving him the look of a toy peg-legged pirate.

There are also miniature versions of all the robots, about a foot high.

Back on the sound stage, they're now rigging a weightless "fly-by" for Joseph Bottoms.

"This ought to be exciting," says the actor, clearly eager about the prospect. "I'm going to be hanging from that track right above us. I'll zoom toward the camera while the camera is moving toward me—against blue-screen,

so it can be combined with another background."

Weightless & Breathless

In the weightless sequences, the actors are not wearing bulky spacesuits—like those in *Destination Moon* and *2001*—that can camouflage comfortable, padded flying belts. Under their tight jumpsuits, the *Black Hole* astronauts wear tight, stiff-rigged briefs.

Actor Robert Forster, who plays another of *Black Hole's* abraded astronauts, concurs. "The trouble is," Forster says, "I've never yet found a belt that exactly fits me. Weightlessness looks really terrific, but it's a... well, it's a ball-breaker; there's no other way to put it."

Forster also feels that he's been working on a significant movie, an artistic film. But he won't be sorry to see the job end. "You know," he says, "a normal picture is shot in, what, 40 to 45 days? *Black Hole* has been shooting for 140! And it hasn't been hard work. I wish it had been. It's *waiting* all the time. Waiting for all the things that make it possible for the special-effects people to turn this into a super movie. So much of what I've had to do just hasn't been real. I've been reacting to things that aren't even *there*."

"But I remember this one day... the *Cygnus* is drifting toward the black hole. We have to make it from one end of the ship to the other—where the space probe is—that we can escape in. And here we are flying, barreling down this huge twisting corridor, with explosions going off all around us, and things flying and falling—and steam and fire. It was real! *Really* real, for once. We weren't just reacting to things we couldn't see!"

As we talk, a makeup artist is adding a scar to Forster's face. "It's healed. But it's a real wound I got that day, and it has to be kept in the picture. I flew into something hanging as I was reaching for the catwalk. Yvette got smacked in the face that day with a gun. Lots of blood. Lots of stitches."

Another delay. They may not put this final scene on film until tomorrow.

"We'll get to it," says a stagehand, "even if it's late tonight. We've had *lots* of overtime on this picture."

Even so, *The Black Hole* is only four days behind schedule. But seeing that in another light, it seems miraculous that it's *only* four days behind.

"We wrap tomorrow," says a technician, "but there's lots to be done—mattes, miniatures, special effects."

Marty Valinsky adds, "The actors are finished, but I still have work to do; more shooting that involves just robots—and that's me."

On our way back to the main gate we pass through an open sound stage where a new, and huge, set is being erected. It has the characteristic beams and trusses of all the *Black Hole* sets. Strange.... Presumably this setting is for a scene involving robots.

The studio stands pat on its projected release date for their most ambitious movie project:

December 11, 1979.

★

BY DAVID GERROLD



The Return of Solomon Short

So many of STARLOG's readers indicated on their Yearbook Poll ballots that they were interested in writing science fiction as a possible career, that it seemed appropriate to ask my old friend Solomon Short for some of his observations on the craft of writing. Herewith:

* * *

The first rule of good writing is, "Always be as precise as you possibly can." Or something like that.

*

A writer is a sane crazy person. He builds worlds that are not out of his own control.

*

There's nothing hard about good writing. Just strike the right keys in the right order and the typewriter does the rest.

*



I've never believed in creativity. There is no such thing. What there is, is editing—the ability to pick something meaningful out of a fast-running stream of free-associating, highly random thoughts. This is what most "creative people" really do—whether they're aware of it or not. It's the perceptive eye of the internal editor that makes a person appear to be creative.

*

Corollary to the above: The internal editor has to have something to start with.

There cannot be significant output until there has been enough input for the mind to begin to perceive patterns in the material. The

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Gerrold has been given a free hand to express any ideas, with any attitude, and in any language he wishes, and therefore, this column does not necessarily represent the editorial views of STARLOG magazine nor our philosophy. The content is copyrighted © 1979 by David Gerrold.

mind has to be exposed to experiences, the more the better, in order to recognize the structures of them. That's how you prime the engine. Once a pattern has been recognized and identified, only then can the mind begin to synthesize equivalent ones. It's this skill at synthesis—substituting new elements for old—that we identify as creativity.

*



Writing for television is a debilitating exercise. How can you inspire an audience to believe in any kind of human values when every 14 minutes someone interrupts you to tell them that they're unfit to live with? The ultimate purpose of commercial television is to convince the viewer that he smells bad.

*

There's no suspense in stories about supermen. We know a superman is going to solve his problems. The real suspense is when we see an average guy, just like you or me, trying to solve a superhuman problem despite all the odds that are stacked against him. Now, that's exciting.

*



Considered by itself, the act of writing is little more than putting marks on paper. There is nothing about it that makes it ennobling, and if it is spiritually elevating, then that is a subjective judgment on the part of the writer.

At best, the act of writing is excellent work therapy and cheaper than a psychiatrist.

Whatever value any piece of writing may have is determined not by the writer, but the reader.

*

There is no such thing as a happy ending. There are only hopeful ones.

*

It is the responsibility of the writer to write the most dangerous book possible.

*

I'd rather write than be President.

*

There is a special government agency just for the purpose of delivering authors' manuscripts to publishers. It's called the Postal Service. They're not very good at it.

*



ART: HOWARD CRUISE

Telling people you're a writer is like telling them you're a priest or a psychiatrist. You have to watch them pretend to be rational for the rest of the evening. This is a great way to liven up a cocktail party.

*

Every ass wants to stand with the King's horses. This may explain why there are critics.

*

Whenever a critic points out that a writer is expressing his own philosophy in a book, he is preparing to stand in judgment of that philosophy.

*

The job of the critic is to excoriate the artist for not doing the work the critic wanted him to do in the first place.

*

A critic is a man who talks behind the artist's back, with the specific purpose that the artist should hear what is being said.

*

When you transcend the medium, you have achieved art.

★

FUTURE CONVENTIONS

Here is the latest listing of the upcoming conventions. If you have any questions about the cons listed, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address below the name of the con. As always, guests and features are subject to last-minute changes. **Conventioners, please note:** To insure that your con is listed on our calendar, please send all pertinent information no later than **15 weeks** prior to the event to STARLOG Convention Calendar, 475 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016.

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Moscow, ID 83843

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NON CON II (SF)

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Canada T5J 2P1

October 5-7, 1979

INTERCON '79 (Trek)

Halifax, England
Empathy
30 Ovenden Way
Halifax, West Yorkshire
England HX3 5PF

October 13-14, 1979

MAPLECON II (SF)

Ottawa, Canada
MapleCon II
P.O. Box 2912, Station D
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada KLP 5W9

October 26-28, 1979

ACADIANACON (SF/Fantasy)

Lafayette, LA
with Kerry O'Quinn & David Gerrold
AcadianaCon
815 East Railroad
Broussard, LA 70518

October 26-28, 1979

FUTURE-CON '79

Pendleton, SC
Future-Con '79
Rt. #4, Box 200
Oconee Estates
Seneca, SC 29678

October 27-28, 1979

NOVACON 9 WEST (SF)

Albany, NY
Novacon 9 West
P.O. Box 428
Latham, NY 12110

November 2-4, 1979

I-CON IV (SF)

Iowa City, Iowa
C. Kay Hinchliffe
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November 9-11, 1979

FUTURE PARTY (SF/Fact)

Albany, NY
C. Bunt
Highland Hills 606
E. Greenbush, NY 12061

November 22-25, 1979

ULTRACON (Fantasy/SF)

Detroit, MI
Omnibus Publishing Co.
Box 23127
Detroit, MI 48223

November 22-25, 1979

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The STARLOG/FUTURE LIFE space art slide show, "Reaching for the Stars," is available to all conventions. Featuring a music score by Eric Wolfgang Korngold, the show generally accompanies a guest appearance by members of the staff. Convention organizers should contact Tom O'Steen to make arrangements.

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About a year before Herrmann's death, he composed and conducted a moody, mysterious score for "It's Alive," an SF-horror tale of a monster, mutant baby. The success of the film led to a sequel, and Herrmann's music was lovingly and respectfully reorchestrated and conducted by his dear friend Laurie Johnson. It's not party music; it's a score for those who want to dim the lights, get into a dark mood, and listen carefully to some wonderful musical chords and effects, including bizarre instruments such as twin synthesizers. The score to "It's Alive 2" (complete on this record) will recall the entire range of Bernard Herrmann's golden years in film music. *Can be played in STEREO or QUAD (SQMatrix)*

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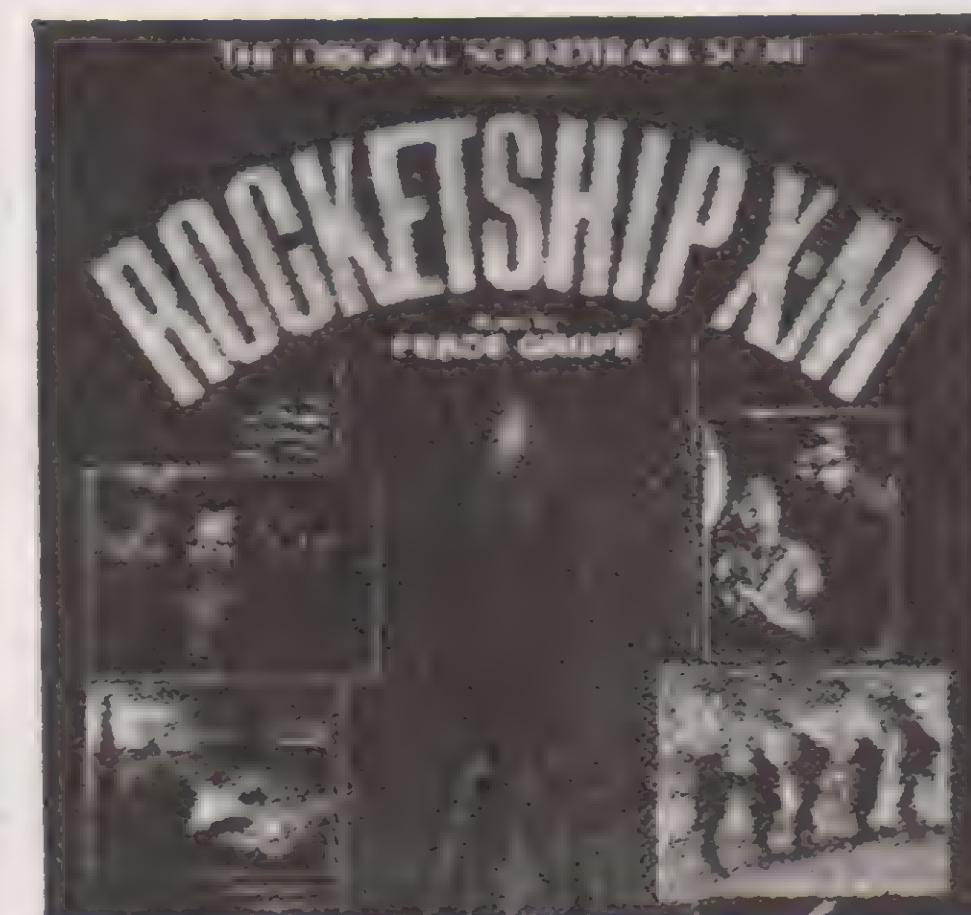
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STARLOG INTERVIEW

Nicholas Meyer: Putting Finishing Touches on 'Time After Time'

By DAVID HOUSTON

Hey you! Get away from that exhibit. You heard me. Now get behind those ropes; that's what they're there for...."

The speaker is a guard in a San Francisco museum. He is shooing a man away from an exhibit labeled "H.G. Wells—A Man Before His Time. Oct. – Dec. 1979." Unaware, the guard has just yelled at H.G. Wells himself, who moments before materialized in a time machine.

We are watching the scene as it runs through a viewer in Edit Room 64 at Warner Brothers, where screenwriter-director Nicholas Meyer is at work on his new movie, *Time After Time*.

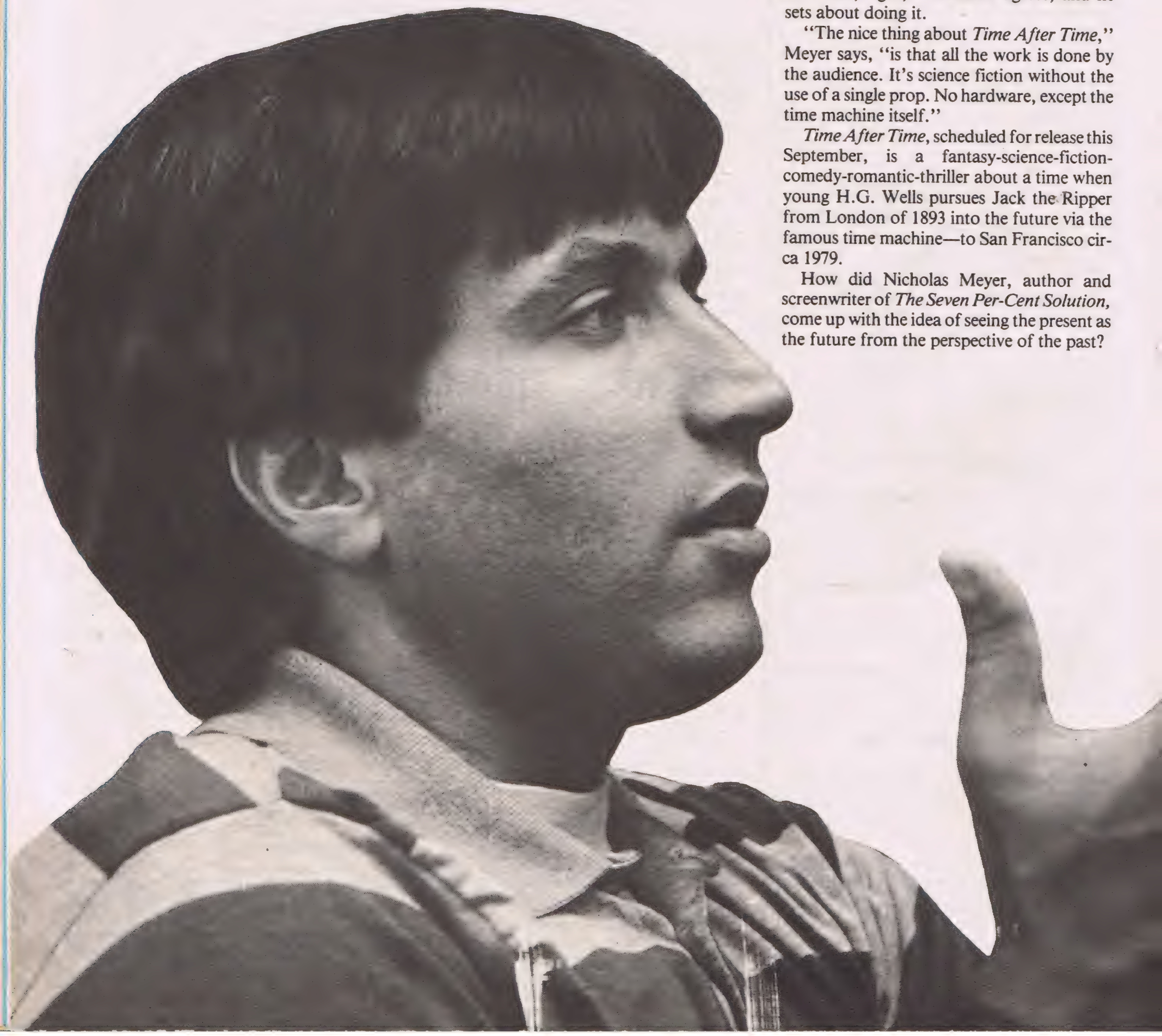
Meyer says to Donn Cambern, editor, "Here's where we could add Wells saying, 'What in the name of all that's wonderful?!'"

"Yeah, right," Cambern agrees, and he sets about doing it.

"The nice thing about *Time After Time*," Meyer says, "is that all the work is done by the audience. It's science fiction without the use of a single prop. No hardware, except the time machine itself."

Time After Time, scheduled for release this September, is a fantasy-science-fiction-comedy-romantic-thriller about a time when young H.G. Wells pursues Jack the Ripper from London of 1893 into the future via the famous time machine—to San Francisco circa 1979.

How did Nicholas Meyer, author and screenwriter of *The Seven Per-Cent Solution*, come up with the idea of seeing the present as the future from the perspective of the past?



"That's easy to answer," he says. "I didn't come up with it at all. A man named Karl Alexander, who was in graduate school at the University of Iowa when I was an undergraduate, called me and said he was writing a novel that was in some sense inspired by *The Seven Per-Cent Solution*.* He asked if I'd critique it. I read it and liked it. I thought it would be much more interesting on film than as a book. Because the visual impact should be stunning!"

As if deliberately bearing him out, the editing screen now shows H.G. Wells leaving the museum in San Francisco to take his first look at Utopia—and running smack into a jangling, jumping, chanting mass of modern-day Hari Krishna kids.

"Now when he gets to the street," Meyer returns to editor Cambern, "I want the traffic really loud, deafening, ugly."

Meyer continues: "So I bought the rights to the story, wrote my own version of it... and that's where the idea came from."

Did *Time After Time* present any unusual production problems?

"Not really," Meyer answers. "Except for the time machine. I don't think you could print what I have to say about that time machine. Let's just say I don't recommend having your props built on the set—especially if they're science-fiction props. Aside from

*History and fiction are joined and bent out of shape in Meyer's *The Seven Per-Cent Solution*, in which Sherlock Holmes seeks the help of Sigmund Freud in curing him of a drug addiction so he can solve the toughest case of his career.



H. G. Wells, as portrayed by Malcom (A Clockwork Orange) McDowell, on the prowl for Jack the Ripper. Wells has been thrust into the present via his own time machine.

getting the machine itself to look right, we had the problem of finding a different way of showing time travel. We didn't want it to look like George Pal's version. We didn't want to show mannequins changing clothes in a store window; didn't want to show newsreel footage. So we're trying something different. I won't tell you how it works. I'll just say that our solution was not a hardware solution."

Richard Taylor, lately associated with *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, is in charge of

those mysterious time-travel effects.

"This is the first time I've ever directed a movie, and believe me, I went for the easiest thing to do. I didn't want to bite off a lot of miniatures, opticals, special effects and so on." The only effects portions of *Time After Time* are the passages through time, which Taylor has committed to film in self-contained scenes which were inserted bodily into Meyer's live-action work.

"If the film addresses itself to the science-



On the set of *Time After Time*: About the time machine, Meyer says, "I don't think you could print what I have to say about that time machine. Let's just say I don't recommend having your props built on the set."



Before he discovers that his close friend is actually Jack the Ripper, Wells faces off with him in a game of chess. Once his true identity is known, Jack "escapes" in the time machine. Says the director, "Our aims are somewhat more serious than the aims of most science-fiction movies."

fiction community—if there is such a thing as a science-fiction community—it will do so on a unique basis. The only film this bears even remote resemblance to is a film called *Alphaville*, which did influence me some. *Time After Time* does not present, fun-

damentally, a very optimistic look at today. "I mean, Wells walks by a TV store. All you have to do is *show* television. It parodies itself. All I had to do was light it and photograph it right."

Back to the editing screen: H.G. Wells has

stopped at a McDonalds to try to get some lunch. He watches the man ahead of him in line, a truck driver type, and listens as the man orders:

Truck driver: "Gimme a Big Mac, an order of fries, an' a small Coke to go, please."

Wells, imitating the trucker, orders next: "Gimme a Big Mac, an order of fries, an'—" he finishes in his native clipped British: "and tea to go, please."

"*Time After Time* really operates on five levels," says Meyer. "It's science fiction. It's a thriller—a homicidal maniac being chased by a man of reason. It's a romance—Wells falls in love with a bank teller, and she's the ultimate quarry of Jack the Ripper. It's a comedy. And it's an ironic social comment—Wells decides he's gone backward as much as he's gone forward."

"The film's jaundiced view is apolitical. H.G. finally says at the end, 'Every age is the same. It's only love that makes any of them bearable.'"

"I hope I don't sound pretentious or pompous when I say that our aims are somewhat more serious than the aims of most science-fiction movies."

More serious than what? *Star Wars*, for instance?

"No, no. *Star Wars* has a serious intent beyond its fireworks. It sought to recreate a mythology, of sorts. To me, *Star Wars* was King Arthur and the Knights of the Round

(continued on page 63)

Meyer (left) and McDowell. Though Meyer doesn't consider *Time After Time* to be true SF, he concedes, "I love science-fiction movies. I love to see people go wild with special effects."



The Unusual Making of **'URSHURAK'**

The Brothers Hildebrandt are about to come out with their own illustrated fantasy novel, and they're hard at work on the film version.

By BOB WOODS



The Brothers Hildebrandt, Greg and Tim, are known to be anything but normal. So it is no surprise that their soon-to-be-released fantasy novel, *Urshurak*,* was illustrated and written in a rather unusual fashion.

A 400-plus-page sword-and-sorcery epic, *Urshurak* contains 16 dazzling Hildebrandt originals, as well as 54 black-and-white pencil

renderings. Basically, it's the tale of forces of good that triumph over forces of evil. Ailwon, the elf prince, has but one objective in life—to face off with Torgon, the death lord, and himself an elf. Ensconced in his far-off bastion, Torgon waits patiently for Ailwon's arrival. The two eventually meet to decide the fate of the kingdom and its nations. It's all resolved in the end, and the land is saved from total annihilation. The story

*Bantam, \$8.95, 448 pages

URSHURAK



may sound like rather normal fantasy fare, but any knowledge of the work of the Hildebrandts will reassure the reader of a totally original treatment.

What makes the making of *Urshurak* so unusual?

Well, first of all, the whole thing was not even originally planned to be a book. Accord-

ing to Greg Hildebrandt, the initial idea was to do a calendar. The Brothers had illustrated three J.R.R. Tolkien calendars, based on *Lord of the Rings*, for Ballantine. As they were putting the finishing touches on the third calendar, they began to think that it was time to do something of their own.

"We finished the 1978 calendar," Greg

remembers, "and things had been brewing for a year about doing something original, a fantasy thing. Were we going to make a lifetime occupation out of this or not? The time was right, and the money was there, so we said, 'Let's do it!'"

At that point, Greg and Tim took about a month and a half trying to come up with some kind of a basic plotline. "It started with a calendar—14 fantasy paintings and a story with each painting. And then it went into a book and then it went to a movie. We came up with a plotline and then started to storyboard it."

The Brothers finally decided that the end result would be a live-action motion picture, preceded by an illustrated novel. When they were nearly a third of the way into the storyline, they started to check out writers. At first, they figured they'd go with an established fantasy author. But after some thought, they had a change of heart, fearing that a known writer might want to come in, take over and make *Urshurak* his own. Instead, the Hildebrandts called on an old friend from hometown Detroit.

Jerry Nichols, a commercial artist with an ad agency in Motor City, hadn't seen Greg and Tim for nearly a year. This was two and a half years ago. Then, one day he received a phone call from Greg, who hit him with the idea of writing *Urshurak*, and gave him a general outline of the story. There was only one problem—Nichols wasn't a writer.

"I'd never been published before," he recalls, "never even submitted anything. I was just writing short stories on my own. I've been writing and drawing comics ever since I was little." Needless to say, the whole thing worried him at first. "I just thought that it wasn't my kind of thing."

Nonetheless, Nichols jotted down some notes during that fateful phone call and later started working on a draft of the first chapter.

Why would the Hildebrandts want an unpublished writer, with no fantasy background to speak of, to pen the words to go with their exquisite paintings?

"We like where his head is at," states Greg simply. "The idea was that we didn't want a guy who was into fantasy. We wanted to let the writer get involved with other levels."

Jerry Nichols' "other level" is his intense involvement with the environment. "I'm an outdoors person," he explains. "Nature's a big part of my life. So, when I started to put the story down, it was the fantasy interpreted in what were the real terms for me. It was an extension of what I feel about things. It just seemed to click."

Greg agrees. "Jerry is totally into environments, which is what we wanted the thing to be about anyway. He wasn't prejudiced about anything. It was perfect, totally ideal!"

The Brothers loved Nichols treatment of the first chapter. Soon after reading it they packed up the more than 1,000 storyboards they'd already executed and headed for Detroit. They sat down with Nichols and laid plans for what has now become *Urshurak*.

It wasn't necessarily unusual that the



Left: Zyra, the Amazon princess—*Urshurak*'s heroine. Inset: The model who posed for the painting.

Below: The Brothers prepare for battle. Inset: The real thing—Greg (left) and Tim Hildebrandt.



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URSHURAK

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and Jerry Nichols • \$8.95 • 448 pp.
(5 1/4" X 8 1/4") • (01166-9)

All fans of the Brothers Hildebrandt will want a copy of *URSHURAK*, the new fantasy epic. This large format book, two years in the making, contains 16 full-color paintings and more than 50 black and white drawings, which bring to life a world peopled by elves and Amazons, wizards and gwarpyes, witches and monsters.



SPECIAL OFFER—LIMITED EDITION URSHURAK POSTERS

Bantam has produced a limited number of "Urshurak" posters especially for Hildebrandt fans. This 18" X 24" full-color reproduction of the *URSHURAK* cover is sure to become a collector's item. "Urshurak" posters must be ordered directly from Bantam (they will not be sold in stores). To get your copy of this fabulous poster, order today.

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author and the illustrators were 600 miles apart; quite often freelance authors and their illustrators work separately. What was peculiar about this arrangement, though, was that the three were, as both Greg and Nichols put it, "on the same brainwaves." Sure, this sounds like a typical line from "hippie types" like the Hildebrandts. But to appreciate the statement, one must know a bit about the twin brothers (born five minutes apart; Greg was the winner), who can individually work on the same painting. One simply picks up the brush and begins where the other leaves off—without missing a stroke. (As was the case with their celebrated *Star Wars* rendering, which they knocked out in 48 hours; one painting while the other slept. Indeed, it is the largest-selling poster of all times.) It also helps to know that Greg and Tim were tested by the Army, and found to be 80 percent accurate on ESP tests. It's unique to talk to them separately, ask them the same questions and note the nearly duplicate responses.

This melding of the minds found a third link in Jerry Nichols. He and Greg delight in telling the story of the night—actually it was 2:00 a.m.—that Nichols called Greg at his home/studio in New Jersey, to tell him about a scene he'd just written. Not acting very surprised, Greg calmly replied that he and Tim had just painted the same scene.

Similar occurrences came up throughout the making of *Urshurak*. The triangle was so equilateral that in some instances the writing was inspired by already-completed artwork, and sometimes vice versa. They seemed to be tuned into a common goal, each end taking parallel paths to its execution.

Oddly enough—but then again, not in this case—another close friend in New Jersey, Bill McQuire, came onto the scene to work on the score for the movie version (which was being considered all along). Like the proverbial cog, McQuire fit right into the *Urshurak* wheel, at times influencing the writing and/or art; other times he was musically inspired by either or both.

Like a dividing cell, the thing grew, next to the Brothers' agent and then to the editors at Bantam. Their involvement didn't come from the creative end, but from professionalism.

Ian Summers, the Hildebrandt's literary agent, is a professional. After they approached him a couple of years ago at a meeting of the Society of Illustrators, The Brothers worked with Summers to develop and later put together a "multi-media" presentation to introduce the rough beginnings (several hundred storyboards and Nichols' first chapter) of *Urshurak* to perspective publishers in New York.

Summers recalls, "We took all the material around and showed it to just about every major publisher in town. We had a live presentation. I was doing the readings and The Brothers were doing sound effects. Greg was doing, maybe, the sounds of arrows flying through the air while Tim was humming some kind of music. That's how we presented this book, which is so *incredibly* unorthodox. But everybody loved it."

The next step was to follow up with a for-

mal proposal, and then the book went up for auction. "This was almost exactly two years ago," Summers recollects. "Everybody came to the auction, and the bids were overwhelming." A heavy bidding session went on, with Bantam coming out on top.

You might think that an established publisher like Bantam would flinch a bit at having an unpublished writer authoring a major title (which they paid many thousands of dollars for). Not Bantam. In keeping with the uncanniness of *Urshurak*'s development, the promotion department and editors at Bantam were an author's/illustrator's dream-come-true. As Greg puts it, "They made their payments on time—and just left us alone."

With Nichols' manuscript complete, the three of them edited, chopped and compressed it. The *Urshurak* baton was now passed to the editors, who, as Greg says, "absolutely didn't touch anything whatsoever with the story. There was phrasiology and gramatical stuff, but there was no change in the essence."

Urshurak—the book, is complete, slated to hit the bookstores by mid-September. In the meantime, great efforts are being poured into phase two of *Urshurak*.—the film. And guess which newly found fantasy author is working on the sequel to his first novel? (Nichols describes *Urshurak II* as a history leading up to the first book's tale, followed by the future of the redeemed kingdom.)

Greg, Tim and composer McQuire recently put together a 20-minute audio-visual presentation, complete with five sections of storyboarding (the entire tale is already story-boarded), five "big, black books" and all of the color paintings from the novel. To top it all off, they hired the prestigious William Morris Agency to represent them in Hollywood. As with the book, everybody seems interested in *Urshurak*: Universal, 20th Century-Fox, Universal, Paramount, even Disney.

To test the waters, The Brothers tried their presentation on the master, one of their since childhood idols, George Pal. "He loved it!" Greg says beaming. "It was like getting the wizard's blessing. I'd never met the man and he's one of my main heroes. I just wanted to let him know that much of it was coming from him."

Also adding to their credibility is another man with a pretty good reputation in the business—John Dykstra. Mr. *Star Wars/Galactica* has been helping the Hildebrandt's, on a rather casual, unofficial—but very serious and committed—capacity all during the film treatment, advising them on the effects that will be needed, and how they might be done.

At press time, The Brothers have yet to sign with anyone, but at this rate it won't be long—and it's sure to go smoothly.

The Brothers Hildebrandt are truly unusual—unusually talented and gifted fantasy artists. Their first novel promises to be unusually brilliant and the live-action *Urshurak* film is certain to be an unusually eye-boggling, mind-stirring extravaganza. They should be looked forward to with unusual anticipation. ★

Hartland

(continued from page 45)

"We made the ship from three axes of neon, in different colors, and a lot of plastic and little pieces."

Smith: "For this episode, they wanted something really spectacular—and we had only two weeks to come up with it. In addition to the neon, there were many little grain-of-wheat incandescent lights."

Garber: "We filmed it on the motion-control set-up, continuous motion, not frame-by-frame. It took two passes. The first was with the grain-of-wheat lights shot through a defraction grating, which gave us the green and red twinklies. Then we lighted the neon and shot that pass through a fog filter."

Smith: "It was really fun doing that."

Garber: "It was exciting to see it happen. We did that, remember, in two weeks; and it took nearly eight months to do the Mothership in *Close Encounters*. The real eye-opener for me is that when you're forced to do something with very little money and almost no time...you can do a lot."

In addition to being directors of special effects for *Buck Rogers* and *Battlestar Galactica* in the past, Smith and Garber will continue in that capacity for the new *Buck Rogers* TV series and the upcoming movie as well as future TV *Galactica* projects. And they have other irons in the Hartland fire.

Garber: "We're doing preproduction work on Universal's TV movie of Arthur Clarke's *Childhood's End*. [See "Visions," STARLOG #26.] If that project goes through—and right now it looks very good—Wayne and I will be producers as well as supervisors of effects. Phil DeGuerre is writing the script and will be executive producer. Another thing we're looking at is *Weather Wars*. It's about a strange group of aliens that land here and try to take over Earth through weather control. They want to turn Earth into a water planet. Big, big special effects. That's why it's having a hard time getting final approvals; not only because of our optical effects work, but because of the extensive physical effects required to turn Earth into a water planet."

Garber: "Another project possibility is a space comedy about a guy that gets caught up in a series of mysterious events that lead him on a wild chase around the solar system. That's a possible feature and we have a draft of the script now, but it doesn't have a title as of yet."

It turns out to be much easier to prod Wayne Smith and David Garber into looking forward to the projects currently capturing their imaginations than to extract facts about their pasts. This likely explains their resiliency. After all, two guys who survived the "dumping," "canning" and "falling apart" of so many major plans—under the guillotines of studios and networks—and who made it safely through the battle between *Buck Rogers* and *Galactica*—have a right to assume that they can do anything. ★

Meyer

(continued from page 58)

Table set in outer space. It worked, and it's what makes that film so enchanting.

"*Close Encounters* also has a serious purpose, a very romantic idea—that we are not alone.

"While I enjoyed *Superman*, I don't think there was any real thematic purpose there. They flirted a little with the idea of Superman as Jesus Christ, but that was always there in the comic book.

"All three of those movies were finally and fundamentally supposed to reassure you. They all have positive, romantic themes. *Time After Time* isn't exactly a reaffirmation, but it does say that, well, that the Victorian era was as horrendous in its own way as this—" He gestures toward the editing screen where there's a midtown San Francisco traffic jam. Meyer says to Cambern, "Now I want this very noisy. We live in a noisy age."

Someone arrives at the editing room door with cups of coffee, and Meyer relaxes and shares his thoughts:

"I don't really have attitudes toward genres of art, genres of fiction—like science fiction—or genres of film. I like good stories. From an early age—like around 12—I was a big Jules Verne fan. I have a very large collection of Jules Verne's works now. Because of Verne, I discovered Wells. They were great rivals, you know.

"Verne wrote what you might call science fact, which is to say that when he got an idea—like going to the Moon—he researched it to death. He found out that if they were going to the Moon, they'd leave from either Tampa, Florida or Houston, Texas. See how on the nose he was? Whereas when Wells wrote his novel, *First Men on the Moon*, he had them get there because this guy invented a substance called cavarite which cut off the force of gravity acting on everything on the other side of it. Which is completely ridiculous. Verne and Wells were philosophical opposites. Verne was largely optimistic about the future and about science. Wells used the ideas of science for other purposes entirely.

"I also used to read the science fiction of Arthur Conan Doyle. Hell, I still do. I love that stuff. I have read science fiction unsystematically. I don't just gobble up everything in the genre. But I do love science-fiction movies! Science fiction is so well-suited to what movies are. I love to see people go wild with special effects!"

Donn Cambern is at it again on the editing table. We're back once more to Wells' arrival at the museum, where there is more sound to be added. "*Hey you! Get away from that exhibit...*" says the guard.

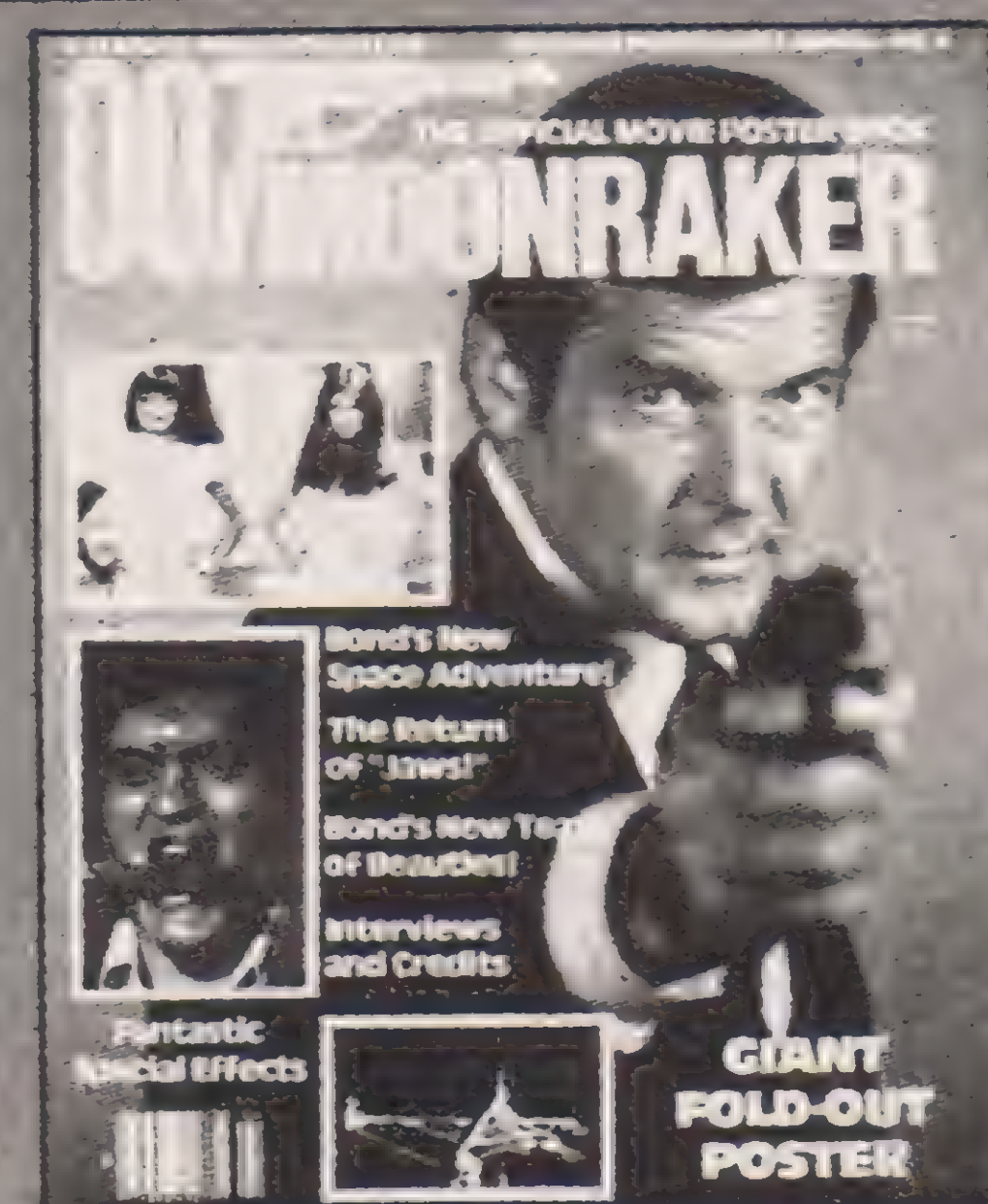
Nicholas Meyer has a parting thought:

"I hope the audience for *Time After Time* won't be impatient with the idea of having to bring along their own special effects."

"*What in the name of all that's wonderful!?*" exclaims H.G. Wells when he first sees the world we all take for granted. ★

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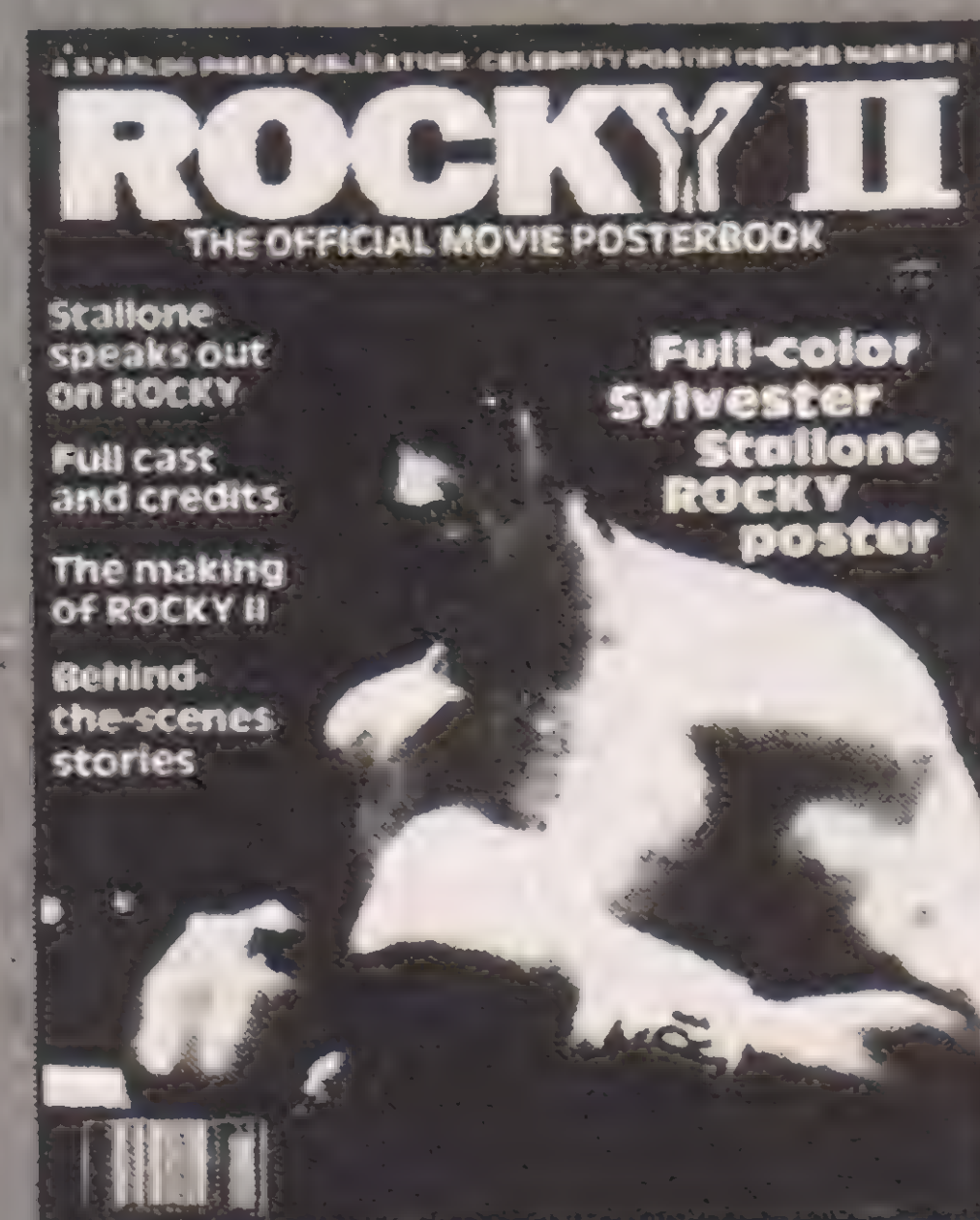
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SFX

SPECIAL EFFECTS

PART XXI:

The Special Effects Supervisor: Brian Johnson and Nick Alder on *Alien*

SERIES EDITED BY DAVID HUTCHISON

Brian Johnson and Nick Alder share the screen credit and responsibilities of "Special Effects Supervisor" on 20th Century-Fox's recent release, *Alien*. The association between the two is not a new one, as Alder remembers. "I suppose Brian and I have known each other for 10 or 15 years, possibly." Johnson concurs. "We've worked on a lot of pictures together. Nicky is working with me now on *The Empire Strikes Back*."

In effect, the partnership of Johnson and Alder enabled *Alien*'s "Special Effects Supervisor" to be in two places at the same time. Alder elaborates: "While I was with the main unit supervising the shooting at Shepperton Studios [where the live-action, full-scale photography was done], Brian was at Bray [Studios] keeping an eye on the models—getting them built and shooting the tests."

Before the filming of *Alien* began, Johnson had already agreed to do the *Star Wars* sequel, but because of his long association with Alder, Johnson felt perfectly confident leaving Alder in charge. Says Johnson, "I directed all of the effects for *Alien* until I left to join *The Empire Strikes Back*. Then Nicky took over."

"I was presented with the script to *Alien* a long time ago," remembers Johnson. "I was working for Gerry Anderson on *Space: 1999*. Walter Hill, Gordon Carroll and another *Alien* director called me in to discuss the script. At that time there were very few special effects in the script—one or two establishing shots in space and some floor effects."

"After some discussion, they asked me to do the movie, but the film was going to be in preparation for some time and lots of things were going to be changed, so I went to work on *Revenge of the Pink Panther*, *Medusa Touch* and one or two other things."

"Then one day I got a call from 20th Century-Fox asking me to do the effects on *Alien*. At that time I was just about to start the *Star Wars* sequel, but I said, 'Great! I'd love to do it.' I had a meeting with Ridley Scott, who is a wonderful storyboard artist. We looked over his drawings and set a tentative date. The understanding was that there weren't going to be so many effects that I couldn't still carry on with *The Empire Strikes Back*."

Although *Empire* and *Alien* are both Fox pictures, Johnson had signed with *Empire* first, so Fox had to get permission from George Lucas and Gary Kurtz to allow Johnson to do both pictures. "Actually, George's company owns *Empire*, while *Alien* is totally financed by Fox," Johnson explains.

"It was never my intention not to give each picture 100 percent of my time. Though we did manage it, I can tell you that it has been a big strain on all the SFX crews concerned with shooting both *Alien* and *Empire*. People develop split personalities when working on two pictures at once—their loyalties get divided. It's very difficult to give a picture your full time and effort when you know there's another which requires your time and effort, too. We worked very long hours on *Alien* and everybody got very tired. That's not the best way to start a major movie like *Empire*."

"We've had some pretty rugged locations on *Empire*. We've been to Norway, where it was 50° below zero. We are working full-out, but we are all going to be very glad to finish the picture and have a rest next year. I haven't had a vacation in five years."

Brian Johnson rose to prominence in the U.S. when his work in Gerry Anderson's *Space: 1999* TV series attracted so much attention. His work for this series and most of the photographic effects work in *Alien* took place at the specially equipped studios at Bray, near Windsor, England, where many of the Hammer horror films were made.

On *Space: 1999*, Johnson is credited as special-effects designer and supervisor. On *Alien*, as supervisor, Johnson "designed the way the effects were to be done. I determined the size of the models," says Johnson, "and their manner of construction. I selected the crew and drew up the budget. I decided how the various shots were going to be done."

A Lucky Career Change

Born in Surrey, England, Johnson's ambition was to take up flying as a career, but he was advised against it on medical grounds. Instead, he got a job with a company specializing in the making of television commercials and after a time found himself promoted to the laboratory. The next three and a half years were spent working with cameras

on a variety of film documentaries and TV commercials, and then as an assistant on feature films.

Johnson's budding career was then interrupted by the National Service, where he performed various duties in RAF Transport Command. Shortly after returning to civilian life he found himself working on visual-effects camerawork, a field in which he has specialized ever since.

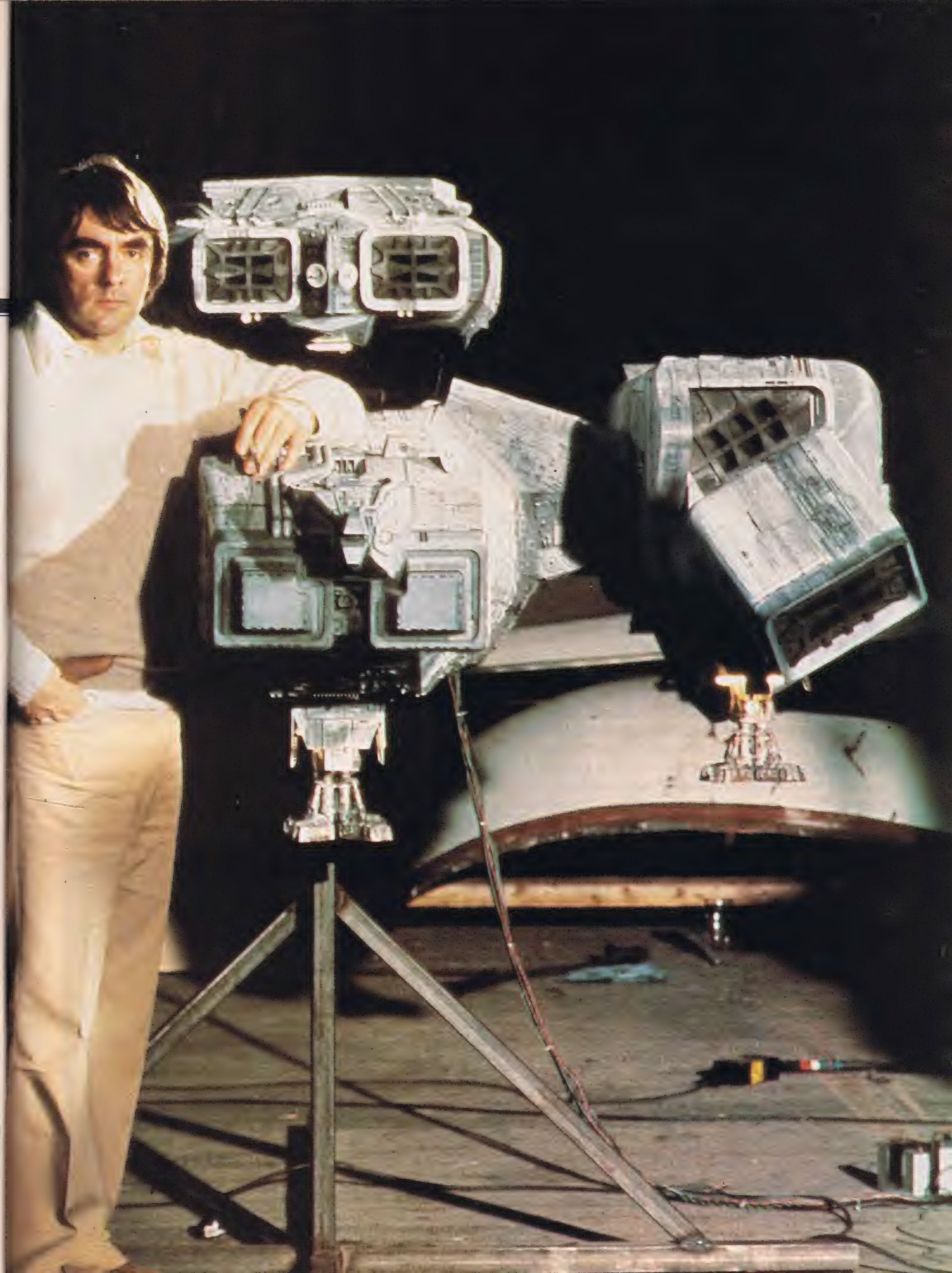
Over the years Johnson has been responsible for many of the eye-boggling events seen in such movies as *Taste the Blood of Dracula*, *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Revenge of the Pink Panther*, *The Medusa Touch*, *Mosquito Squadron*, *Nothing But the Night*, *The Blockhouse* and *The Tamarind Seed*. His effects magic has also been featured on television on *The Protectors*, *New Scotland Yard*, *Day After Tomorrow*, *Stingray*, *Thunderbirds* and, of course, *Space: 1999*.

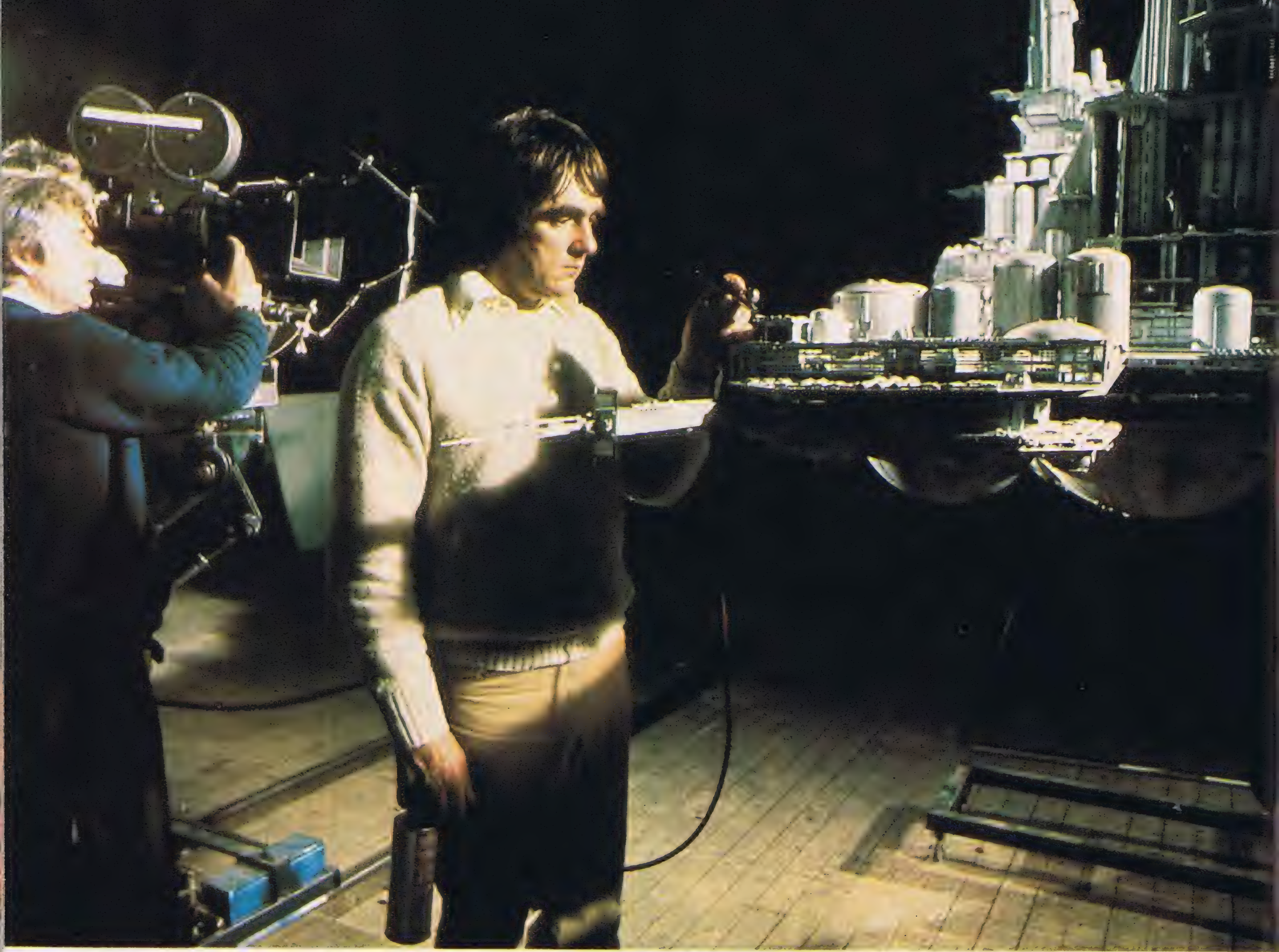
On *Space: 1999* his jobs included designing the models, painting original artwork, working on floor effects and directing the combined skills of his hand-picked, and highly efficient, 12-man effects and camera crew.

Nick Alder was born into the film industry. His father, the late John Alder, was a camera engineer. The younger Alder began his career as an assistant rostrum cameraman with a film company making commercials. Eight years later, he switched to camera special effects. He joined the late Les Bowie's special-effects company in the early 1960s where he worked on several Hammer films.

Alder spent 11 months in Egypt working on the epic *Khartoum*, then the Academy Award-winning *A Man for All Seasons*; after this he was off to Malta for a thriller, *Twist of Sand*, then two years on the aerial process photography for the mammoth *The Battle of Britain*. From working in the air, he went underwater for photography on *Submarine X-1* and the underwater tank sequences on the Alistair Maclean thriller *Fear is the Key*. His other films have included *The Long Duel*,

Brian Johnson pauses to pose with the *Nostromo* on the floor of Bray Studios near Windsor, where the models were built and effects photographed for *Alien*.





Brian Johnson adjusts one of the outrigger probes on the rear of the processing refinery model.

The Medusa Touch, *The Wild Greese*, *The Revenge of the Pink Panther* and three years as special-effects cameraman on *Space: 1999*.

They Came Prepared

The varied backgrounds of Allder and Johnson prepared them ideally for the problems they encountered on *Alien*. Johnson remembers, "One of the difficulties with *Alien* was the way the project grew. With [director] Ridley Scott you've got a man who keeps adding things and changing things. One has to be on top of the situation and say, 'Well, no, you can't do that at the moment, but give us a few days, a few hours and you will be able to do it.'

"We went through quite a number of evolutionary processes—equipment was modified or thrown out altogether as new ideas were generated. Usually the new equipment would be totally different from the original device. Eventually, we got what we hoped would be convincing on film."

Johnson and Allder found Scott's penchant for last-minute improvisation to be both a challenge and a joy. "This is why mak-

ing motion pictures (even the most commercial) is still an art form," Johnson believes. "You still have the joy of experimenting and discovering new things; whether it's a new chemical that gives you a weird texture to

photograph, or just spending an afternoon dropping different substances on glass and photographing them. You look at everything in life from the point of view of what it would look like on the movie screen if you tried to



Nick Allder examines the special plates used for projection of planet surfaces.

PHOTO: 1979 20TH CENTURY-FOX

photograph it."

STARLOG magazine visited Bray Studios last October. There, Nick Alder, at work on *Alien*, was kind enough to show us the *Nostromo* and its cathedral-like "processing refinery" in tow.

"ALIEN"

Special Effects Credits

Special Effects

Supervisors . . . Brian Johnson and
Nick Alder

Floor Effects Supervisor

. Allan Bryce

Special Effects

Technicians David Watkins,
Phil Knowles, Roger Nichols,
Dennis Lowe, Neil Swan,
Guy Hudson

Matte Artist Ray Cagle

Electronics and Video

Coordinator Dick Hewitt

Supervising Model

Makers Martin Bower,
Bill Pearson

Director of Photography for

Miniature Effects . . . Denys Ayling

Alien Design H.R. Giger

Alien Head Effects

Created by Carlo Rambaldi

Small Alien Forms Co-designed

and Made by Roger Dicken

Additional Alien

Mechanics Carlo DeMarchis,
Dr. David Watling

Alien Effects

Coordinator Clinton Cavers

Alien Bolaji Badejo

Special Optical Effects Filmfex

"The complete model," said Alder, "is about 18 feet long and weighs about 800 lbs. The detailing of the models is particularly rich, much of it manufactured and turned out on a lathe. From whatever angle and however close you wish to work the camera, the sense of scale and detail never diminishes."

Three models of various scales were built of the *Nostromo*. The ship's jets are rigged with high-intensity quartz lights and plumbing for the vapor jet. Alder explained, "We started using freon on *Space: 1999* for rocket exhaust in space. Thank goodness we've left behind the pyrotechnic exhausts like we used in *Thunderbirds*. On this kind of work it would look very silly, and completely incorrect. The plumbing we have installed in the tail of the model for the exhaust jet is very sophisticated—it is electrically operated by remote control so that at the touch of a button the jet will switch on or off."

The model of the *Nostromo* is surrounded by a black cyclorama. "Our camera system incorporates a very sophisticated grid system



The model of the derelict ship was about 12 feet across.

so we can actually do multiple exposures. This technique, which records only on the original negative, will give us much better quality than traveling mattes or blue-screen backing shots. When using the grid we take very careful records of what areas of the frame have been exposed in each pass through the camera. Then we can rewind and overlay another exposure in what we know to be a clear piece of film.

"We can get by with a lot of shots in which a starfield isn't necessary, or is in a different area of the frame. Where the ship must cross a starfield, however, we have rotoscoped mattes. Rotoscoping involves taking a sequence frame by frame, making line drawings, hand-painting the black mattes, then shooting that in high-contrast to actually create our matte and eventual effect. It's the only time we use an optical printer."

Solving the "Nostromo" Problems

Lighting the *Nostromo* and its processing refinery, which even in model form are 18 feet long, so that the illumination appears to emanate from a single point source—the nearest star—was something of a problem. Alder pointed out that there are no double shadows on the model, even though several lighting instruments in a row are used to illuminate it from the camera. "We use a series of flags to cross one light over to the other. Where the shadow created by one flag starts, the light from the second lighting instrument in the row starts." By careful placement of flags and lighting instruments the model can be made to appear to be lit from a single point-source.

Previous issues of STARLOG and FUTURE LIFE have discussed the history of the design



H. R. Giger and an assistant work on the sculpture of the derelict pilot.



Nick Alder supervises the photography of the 2 1/4-inch transparencies that depict planet surfaces. Various chemicals and liquids are photographed in a tank—a "model" atmosphere.

of the ships and sets with artist H.R. Giger and Scott (see STARLOG #26; FUTURE LIFE #11). Brian Johnson adds his own comments to the history. "We had a whole series of people—Chris Foss, Ron Cobb and Ridley Scott—create sketches of the ships. It was my job to assess these and decide on the size of the model needed for any particular shot. In the end no one could really make up their minds as to how the *Nostromo* should look. Ridley is the kind of person who likes to see something in three dimensions before he actually says yes.

"My crew constructed a small *Nostromo* model—just the basic front section. I showed it to Ridley, who thought it might be alright, but that he would probably want to make a few changes. The talk went on and on and I was getting close to my shooting date and couldn't wait any longer. So I went ahead and built this huge model. When it was ready, we showed it to Ridley. I had my fingers crossed,

because he could have turned around and said that he didn't like it!

"But he did like it... I knew, though, that somewhere along the line he'd want to modify it. He modifies everything as he goes along. We changed the color about four or five times; it gradually got spikier, but the basic shape was always fairly similar. The rear end was altered slightly and it had lots of various probes and other things added to it."

The craft that the crew of the *Nostromo* finds on the surface of the planet is a Giger design. "We took Giger's sketch and sculpted a small replica without any detail—just the basic shape, for a test." Johnson explains the problems involved in transforming a two-dimensional sketch into a three-dimensional sculpture. "It's a common problem. A director will come to you with drawing; 'Hey, I've got this great sketch!' But it's a two-dimensional drawing, and when you put it into three dimensions it never looks the

same. You have to be able to look at a sketch and say, 'That's going to look like a pile of rubbish. Why don't you let me have a go at making something that will be similar, but might have a totally different shape in three dimensions?'

"We showed the rough sculpted form of the Giger sketch to Ridley, who said that it was somewhere near what he would like. Then we built a huge one about 12 feet across that would be used for background establishing shots."

Alder recalls that "the model was built of polystyrene with a fiberglass 'skin.'" The model was also used in the long shots of the explorers as they approached the ship. "It was not a composite shot, however," smiles Johnson. "The explorers were tiny puppets with lights on them!"

Setting Up Floor Effects

Besides the use of photographic effects with their models, mattes and starfields, there are the floor effects—the mechanical devices that must be built for the full-scale, live-action set. These included the alien itself and all of its forms, special smoke, steam and fire effects.

One of the most interesting innovations was the use of a pulse laser on the planet set to produce the blue-beam effect that seemed to be protecting the egg chamber in the base of the alien ship.

"We used the laser," Johnson continues, "because Ridley wanted to do something different. We looked at all sorts of lasers while we were at Shepperton Studios; there is a company there that has lasers for hire. We got one on stage and played with it—puffed smoke and dry-ice fog through it. We shot several different sequences using it, but they were all cut out. Only the egg chamber sequence remains. I think it's very effective as some sort of weird protective ray or whatever—it's perfect for the situation."

Perhaps one of *Alien*'s most startling and horrific sequences that makes extensive use of floor effects is the "Chest-Burster" scene. Kane, who has been attacked by the "Face-Hugger," is finally killed by the Chest-Burster—a larval stage of the alien creature—as it literally bursts from his chest, breaking the ribs outward, splattering Kane's blood everywhere and finally making a bee-line for the darkest regions of the *Nostromo*. The sequence is very convincing...to say the least.

Johnson recalls that day on the sound stage at Shepperton. "We did take after take of the Chest-Burster sequence. Some of it was just too horrendous for words. The lighting cameraman, Derek Vanlint, who saw the rushes the next day, was sick after watching them. I think to get the R rating they used the most sophisticatedly convincing takes, but there were some that were really horrendous...bloody beyond belief."

The sequence, though, is a good example of a floor-effect problem. "Not that you do chest burst everyday," Johnson laughs, "but

the problem of setting a mechanism with some sort of dynamic action into a very confined space—this is one of the floor-effects man's regular problems."

"Poor John Hurt"

For the sequence in which the Chest-Burster actually breaks through John Hurt's rib cage, Johnson's crew built a special chest cavity for the hydraulic rams and the little puppet alien, actually a hand puppet. "Poor John Hurt," Johnson explains, "had to lay on foam-rubber pads which weren't very comfortable, with his head canted back at an angle. We used John's real head and built up a chest cavity that allowed us enough freedom of movement to get the mechanisms inside it; most of his body was below a cutaway section of the set, while we manipulated the mechanical chest. But there still wasn't much room to get all the mechanisms in there. You had to have quite a lot of leverage because we had to actually burst through the fabric and the layers of structure, bones and all the other things that were in there. We used a series of pneumatic arms and levers which had tremendous force."

As the alien creature grows on board the *Nostromo*, at one point it leaves behind a trail of some slimy substance. "The slime was a substance with a lot of long chain polymers, so it would extend and look very oozy—pretty revolting stuff. We try to work with substances that are as non-toxic as possible. It is bad enough having to work with pyrotechnic materials, as people can get injured very easily. We do a bit of research into whatever chemicals we use to make sure that they are not going to harm anyone later on in life or whatever. In years past," Johnson admits, "carcinogens and other dangerous substances have been used without regard for the human damage they could cause. Unfortunately, most of the substances in the special-effects man's kit are fairly toxic, so we



The explorers approach the derelict craft. Only a portion of the ship was built full-scale.

have to take precautions, such as proper ventilation and making sure the substances are labeled with warnings."

Johnson sighs when he remembers how much of their work never made it to the screen. Many sequences were filmed, among them the much-talked about "cocoon sequence." "There are very few of Ray Caples's matte paintings left in the film. They were cut out, not because there was anything wrong with them, but because when the movie was trimmed down to make it tighter, they were no longer needed.

"I'm sure that if the film is a great success at the box office, in the re-release (which seems to happen with every major picture

that makes a lot of money, nowadays) they should allow Ridley complete control over the second version. I think that he would like it to be just slightly longer and to include one or two extra bits and pieces; not just to be gory, but because he thinks (and I'm sure he's right) that there would be a greater dramatic effect."

What It's All About

With Brian Johnson and Nick Alder moving on from *Alien* to the set of *The Empire Strikes Back*, STARLOG asked Johnson to explain a bit about the role of a special-effects supervisor.

"Part of what being a supervisor is all about is being able to pick people who you know are going to come up with the goods. There's a lot more to it than just actually working on the movie. You're not a father figure, but you need to be something of an amateur psychologist. If you start having rows among the crew on a picture like *Alien* or *Star Wars*, you're in trouble.

"I'm a great believer in giving people responsibility and trusting them in the way they do things, but at the same time steering them in the direction you want them to go. In that way you get the best out of everybody. I do my best to get everybody a credit. The result is that you get total commitment.

"The effects on *Alien* are a total product of an amazing team of guys who worked together. If there are attributions of amazing special-effects work, you really must credit the work of the entire crew—they all worked their hearts out.

"A special-effects supervisor is only as good as the crew around him. With Nicky Alder and the rest of the crew, I think I've got the best special-effects team in the world!" ★



Nick Alder inspects one of the armature arms designed by Rambaldi for the alien.

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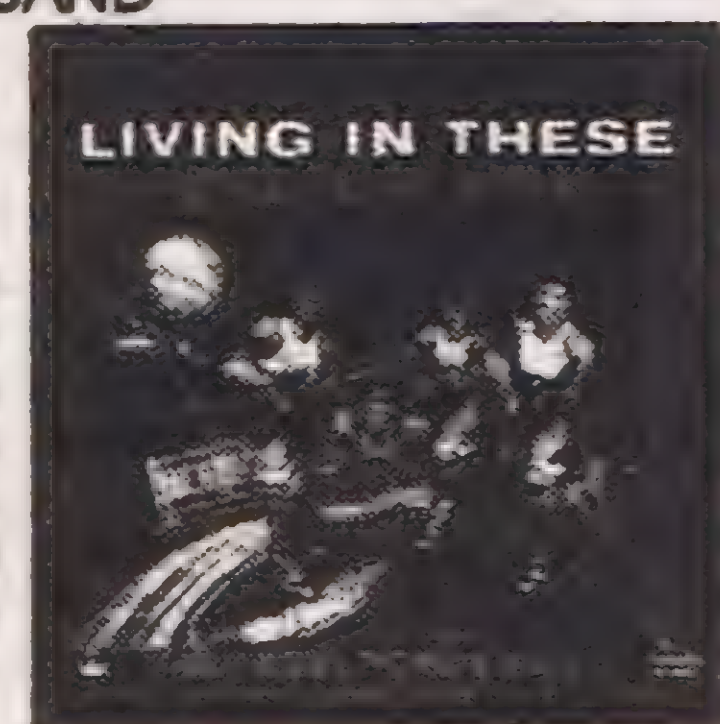
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This is the world of *Dune*, the first book (1965) in Frank Herbert’s classic trilogy about the taming of a planet and the ascent of its messianic leader. The impact of the novel is unforgettably visual. George Lucas paid tribute to it in *Star Wars*—the dunes, the desert people, the skeleton of what might have been a sandworm, the sandcrawlers. Now, at last, the original is destined to become a motion picture.

Dino De Laurentiis reportedly paid \$1 million for the screen rights.* His second noteworthy decision was to ask the author to write the screenplay.

“I have a basic knowledge of special effects,” Frank Herbert said in a recent interview.** “You can do a sandworm, for example, in segments, so you think you’re seeing a whole worm when you’re actually seeing a mocked-up wall. But the real bottom line is that *Dune* is a story about people.”

True. But more important, when it comes to film scripts, *Dune* is a story.

It begins on the garden planet Caladan where Paul Atreides, 15-year-old son of Duke Leto Atreides, is being prepared for the family’s move to Arrakis—where the House of Atreides will replace the House of Harkonnen as rulers and custodians of the “spice” (drug) trade, according to the Emperor’s orders. But on Arrakis, the dune planet, old, fat, devious Count Vladimir Harkonnen has no intention of being relieved of his power and wealth; he sets traps for Paul and his family. Aware of the approaching treachery (there are spies everywhere), Paul’s family has no legal choice but to walk into Harkonnen’s hands.

Paul is a pupil of his mother, Lady Jessica—a Bene Gesserit: a religion with a

“terrible purpose” for Paul and secrets, leading to uncanny mental power and control. Paul has learned the Bene Gesserit ways, and is being groomed to be not only the next Duke but a spiritual leader as well. “When religion and politics travel in the same cart,” Jessica says, “the riders believe nothing can stand in their way.” Young Paul is, consequently, the prime target not only of the Harkonnens but also of the Emperor.

“Always strive to see the plans within plans within plans,” Jessica admonishes. On Arrakis, after the Harkonnens have driven the remaining Atreides into the horrifying desert, Paul truly needs such advice. If he is to survive, he must master the desert in the manner of the nomads, the Fremen; he must be accepted as one of them; he must prepare them for the zealots’ attack against the Harkonnens and the Empire. And he is only a boy.

The plot of the novel is delectably complex. Who will end up a betrayer, who a victim, who a hero and who an unexpected villain? Which of the plans within plans within plans is real? If Paul possesses supernatural powers, will this save or doom him? The Fremen—how do they live, master the sandworms, and what are their customs, strengths, ideals?

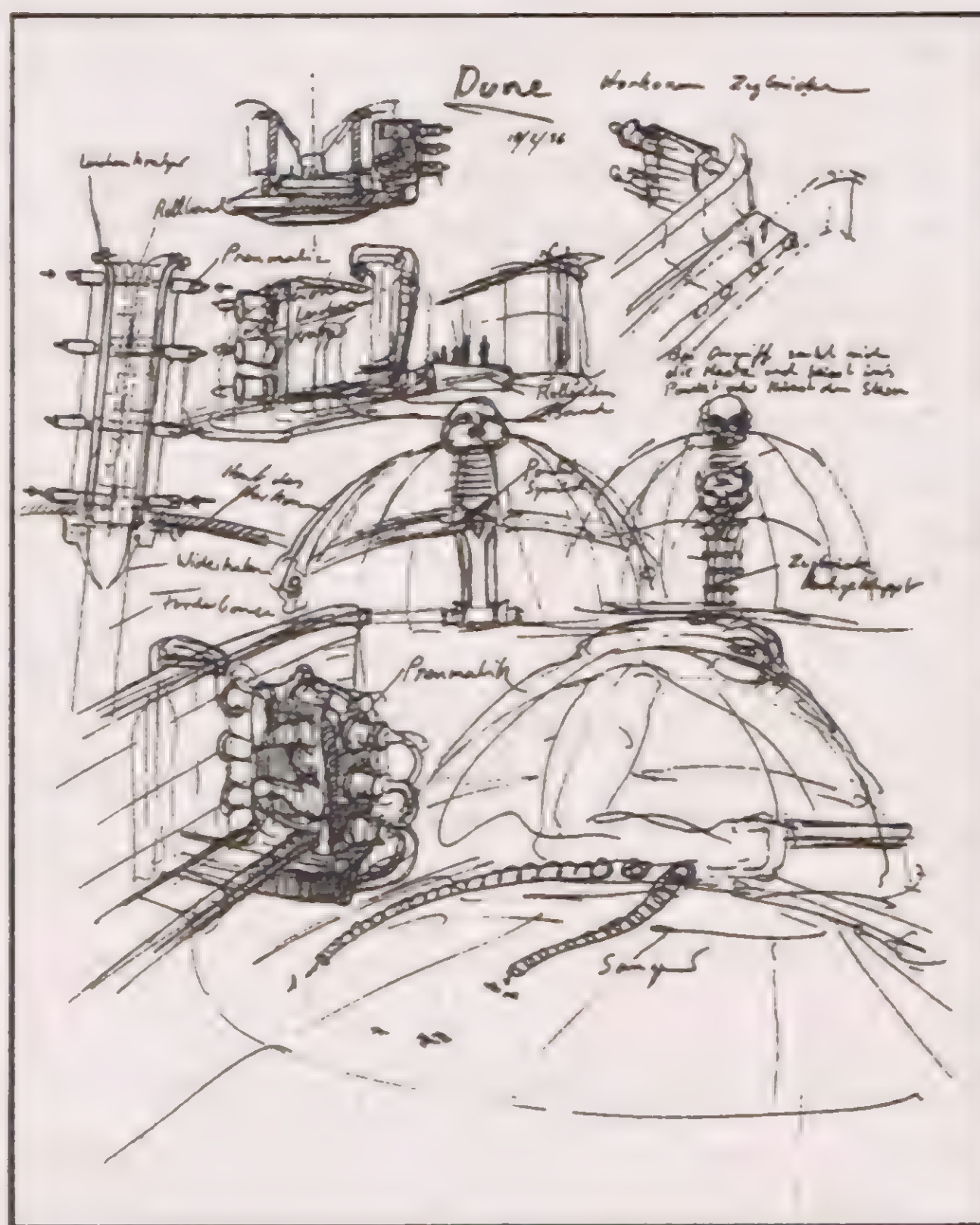
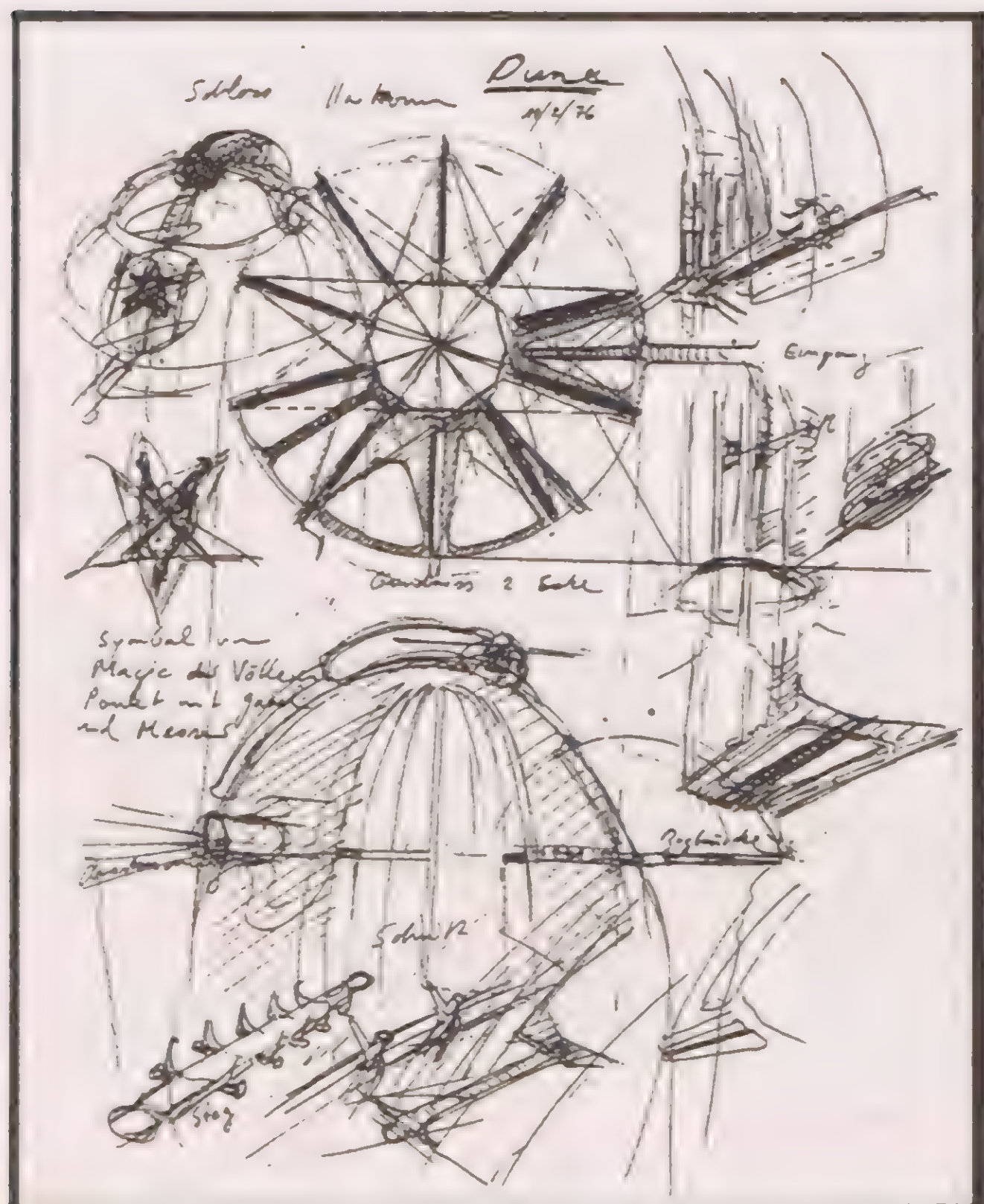
Frank Herbert describes his book as “dense.” That it surely is. It is thick with the sciences of planetology and ecology, the politics of tyranny, the fast action of an oppressed culture fighting for its freedom and the psychologies of the larger-than-life figures involved in such momentous upheavals of civilization.

“Obviously,” says Herbert, “we have to make a high-density film. How long a film can you make and still get the investment out of it? That’s the real question.”

Aware of the problem, De Laurentiis has suggested that *Dune* might be made as two movies.

“Paul’s story falls neatly into two packages,” says Herbert. The first would concentrate on Paul’s training and his acceptance as leader of the Fremen; the sequel would show Paul as Maud’Dib, the prophet, as he leads his Fremen against the Empire. “I have no objection to breaking it up,” he says, “if that’s the way we have to do it to tell the story.”

Of all the epics in science-fiction literature, *Dune* is one of the few packed with philosophy and insight that also contains a coherent and suspenseful story. If the film is approached reverently and intelligently, we may at last have a cinematic vision worthy to rival *Star Wars* in popular appeal. ★



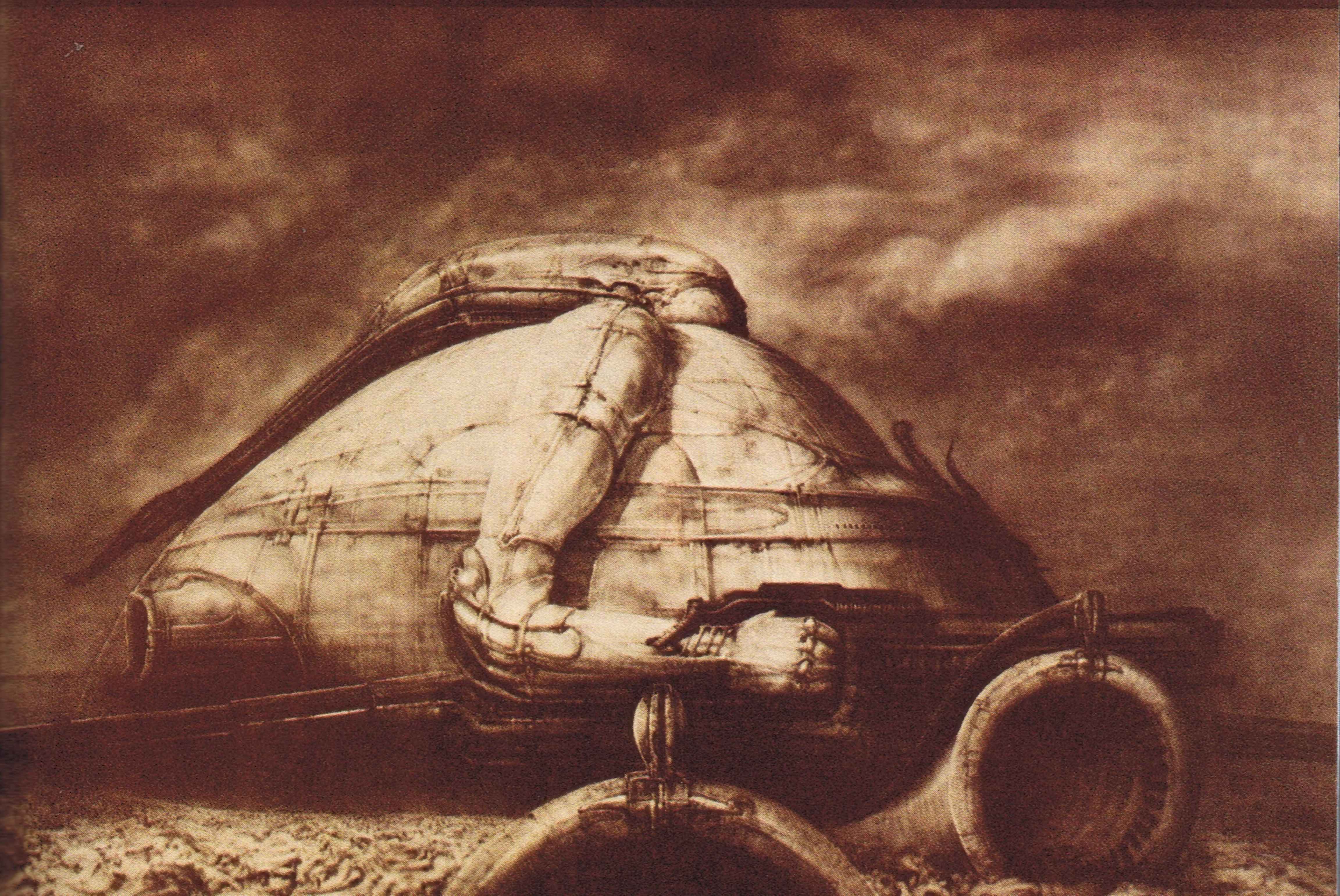
The illustrations on this spread are from H. R. Giger’s *Necronomicon*, executed for the ill-fated Jodorowsky production of *Dune*. In the pen-and-ink sketches above, Giger was working out the bizarre defenses of Harkonnen Castle. The painting opposite (bottom right) shows an exterior profile of Harkonnen—done in Giger’s unique “biomechanical” style. Above it is a detail of the only access route to the castle. As Giger envisioned it, unwanted visitors could be disposed of at the push of a button.



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Twenty-five years ago such a circumstance would have been considered a science-fiction scenario, but in the world of 1979 we know better; this is a part of our everyday reality.

Besides, in a science-fiction story it wouldn't happen that way. The hero would fight against time and hopeless odds to somehow avert a catastrophe—finding a seemingly "impossible" solution to the problem at the very last—perhaps necessitating the ultimate personal sacrifice.

In real life, there were no individual, center-stage heroes. There was, however, an unbelievably dedicated crew of NASA engineers and technicians working round-the-clock for months who managed to neatly dispose of their Herculean labor. And if the heroes of this little drama are many, its villains are manifold. The blame for the total loss of our first, historic space station, along with the possibility of a calamitous loss of life, must lay at the feet of our elected representatives; both the current and previous administrations and the members of Congress over the past half-decade share the responsibility for this waste of resource and wanton endangerment of life.

With little appreciation for tomorrow's problems and priorities, the federal government over that period slashed NASA funds so severely as to practically emasculate the space initiative and place the whole program in jeopardy.

But fact is stranger than fiction and the final irony of this historic incident is soon to unfold. This October will see the nationwide release of AIP's *Meteor*—a big-budget space disaster film that's been more than three years in the making (see "Log Entries" in STARLOG #1).

The makers of the film feel that it should be billed as "science fact," rather than science fiction. Certainly, the premise of the movie is a distinct scientific possibility, conceding that the odds of a giant meteor on a direct collision course with Earth are extremely small. The story does have an heroic figure who, against all odds, is instrumental in achieving global cooperation in facing the deadly challenge. But, because of certain circumstances, humanity's efforts fall short. Indeed, *Meteor* is expected to live up to its label of "disaster movie" better than most.

It is here that I disagree with the film's producers on two counts. First of all, I'm not that cynical. Having just witnessed what a handful of NASA technicians accomplished with severely limited resources, I feel confident that humankind could avoid the kind of catastrophe pictured in *Meteor*. However, the story does have a message and carries a warning to society-at-large: Putting politics before the business of survival and co-existence leads to disaster. This clearly places the film within the genre of science fiction. SF authors have used holocaust scenarios to bring attention to critical problems for over 100 years.

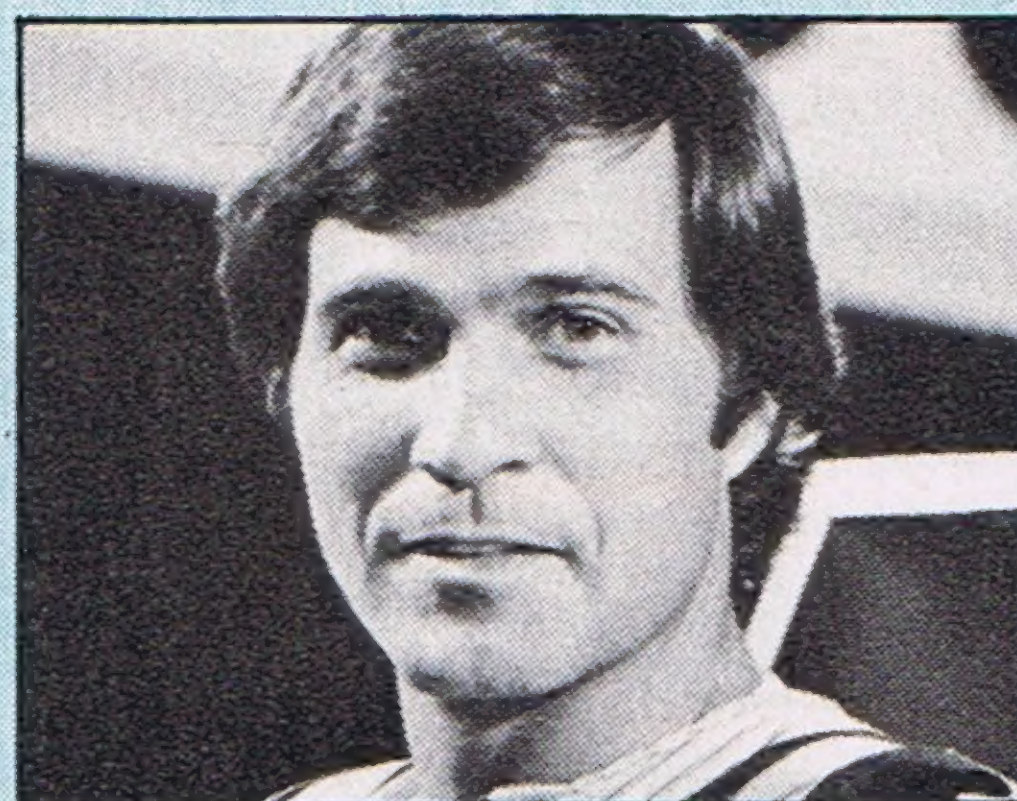
Although the final words on Skylab have yet to be written, the experience can be taken as a positive sign. . . with a caution. We have proven that we *are* the masters of our technology, but the priorities of our nation—of our species—are long past due for an overhaul.

Howard Zimmerman
Howard Zimmerman/Editor

NEXT MONTH

FALL TV PREVIEW

"BUCK ROGERS"



Buck is alive and living at NBC. In #28 we'll have feature coverage of Buck's new TV incarnation, including an exclusive interview with producer Bruce Lansbury and a sneak preview of the first nine episodes!

"GALACTICA"

It may be canceled, but *Battlestar* fever still rages through the SF-TV fan community. We continue our coverage of *Galactica* with a Herb ("Boomer") Jefferson interview and an incredible trip through the heart of a Cylon Basestar!



SUPERHEROES



The *Hulk* returns, while *Wonder Woman* is gone. . . but not forgotten. Issue #28 will have a *Wonder Woman* wrap-up and episode guide, plus an interview with the Green Goliath himself—Lou Ferrigno.

PLUS

We'll be covering the rest of the fall TV line-up with news and previews. And Don Post Studios, the specialty house that produced the authentic, best-selling *Star Wars* masks, is now in production with their *Alien* designs—we'll have the complete story. And there will also be a few *bonus* surprises!

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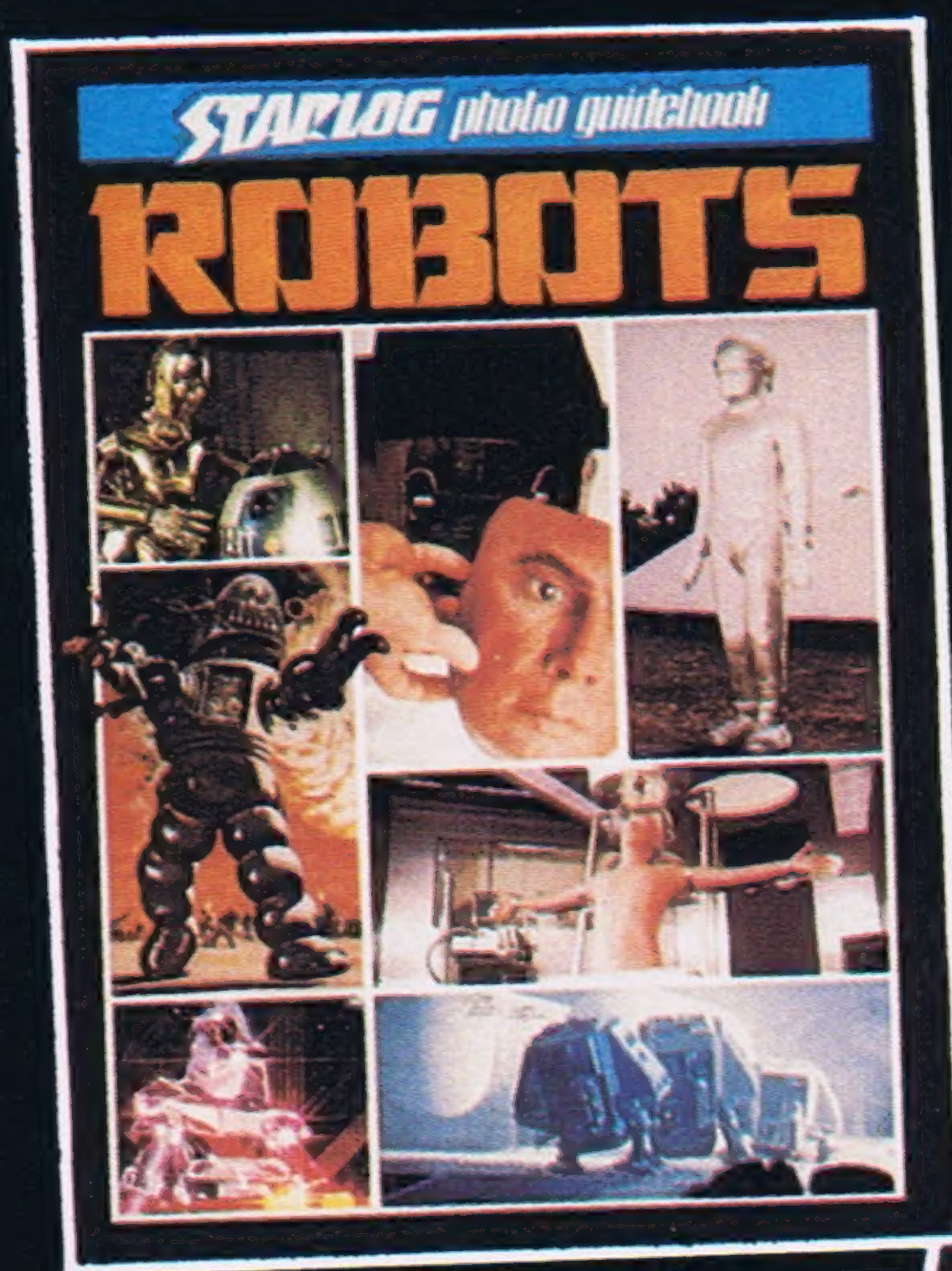
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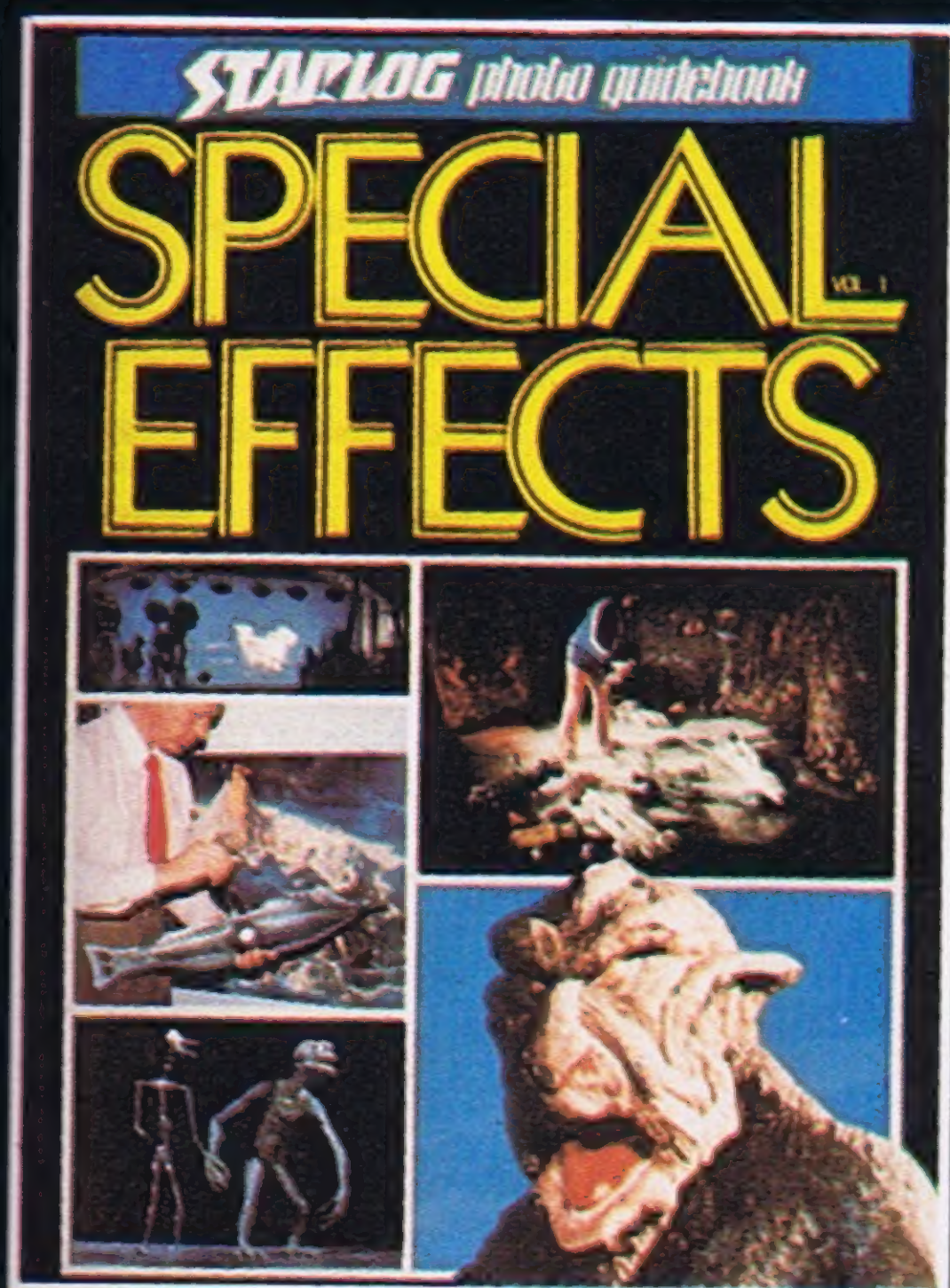
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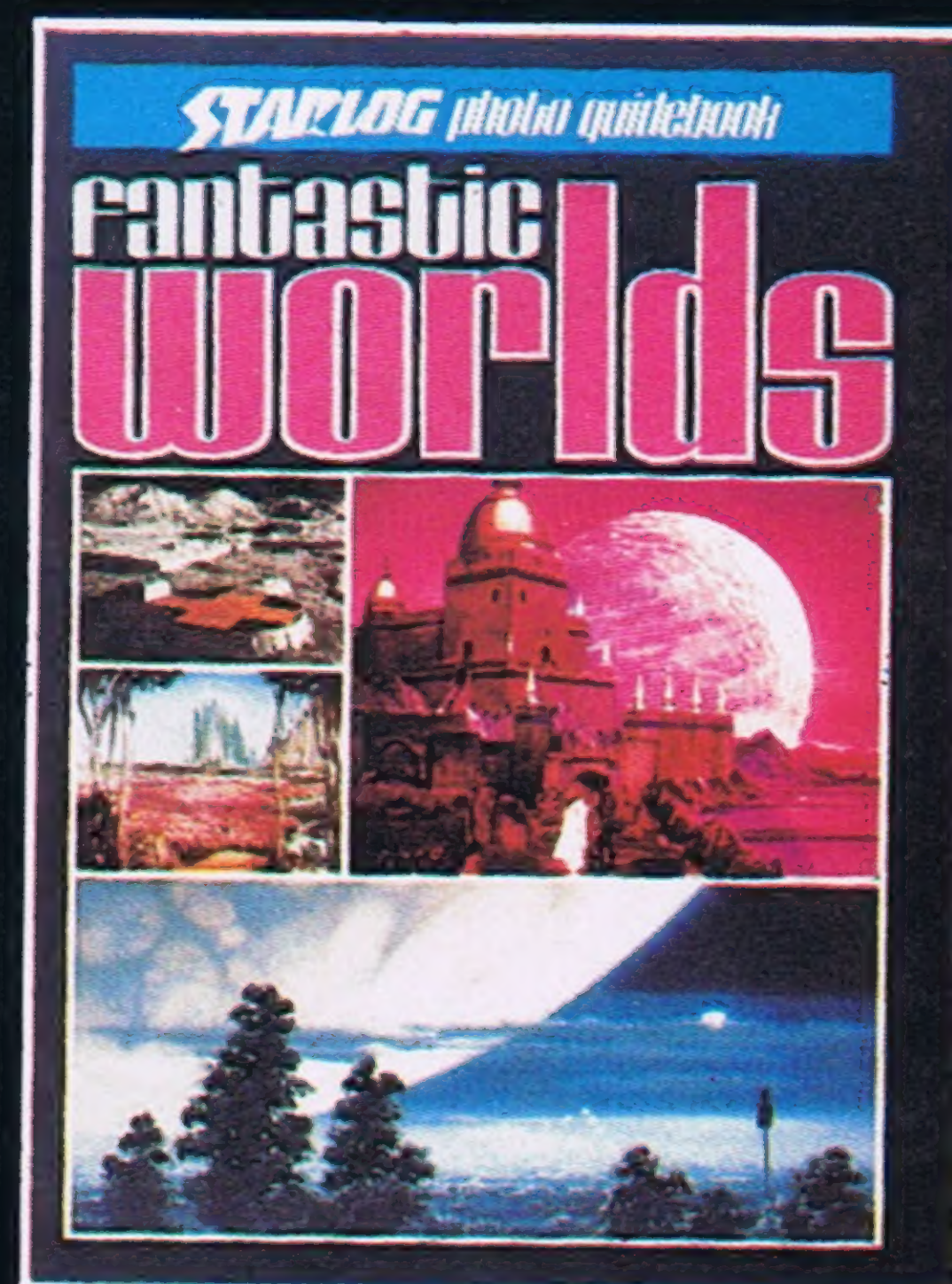
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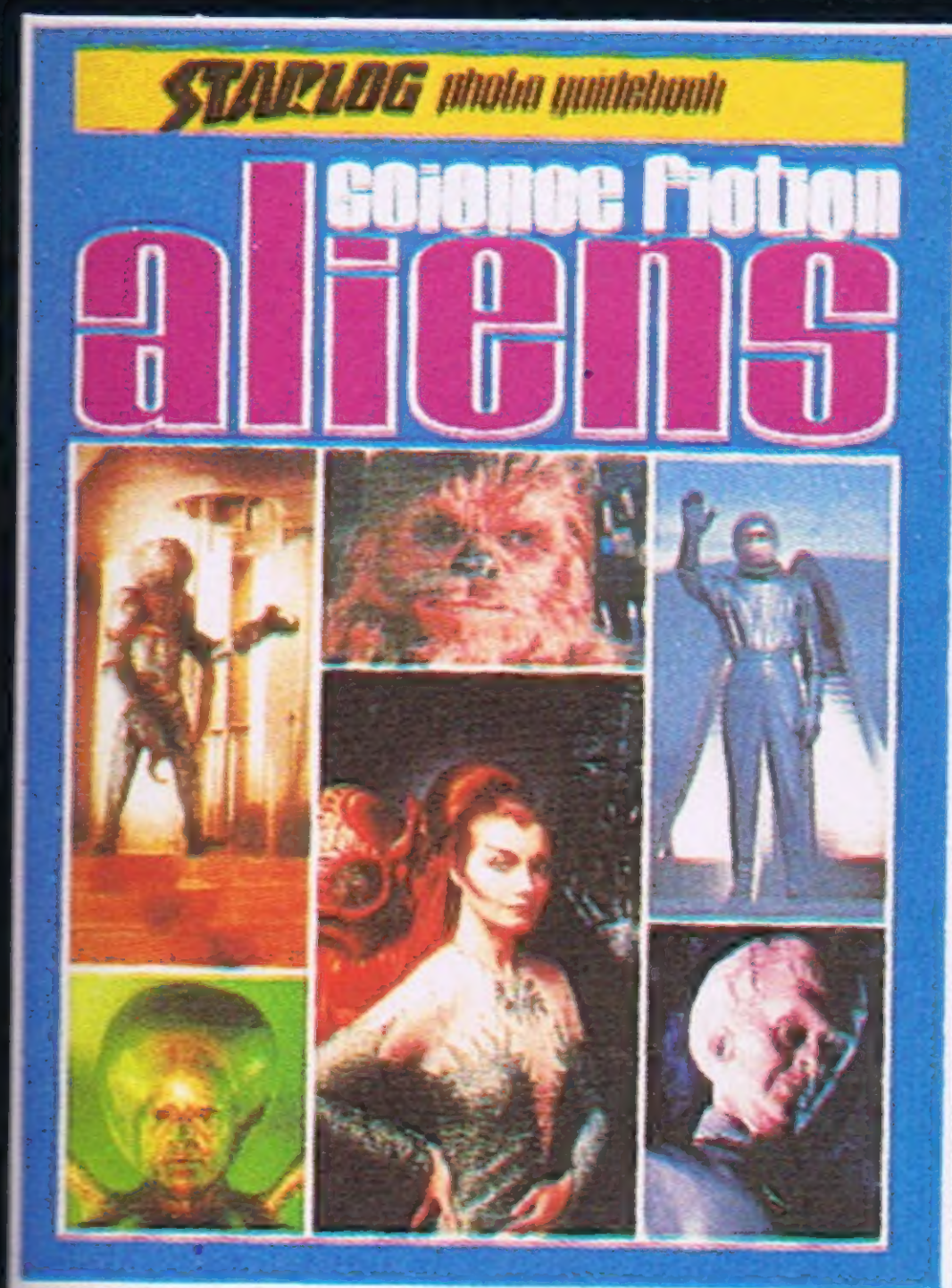
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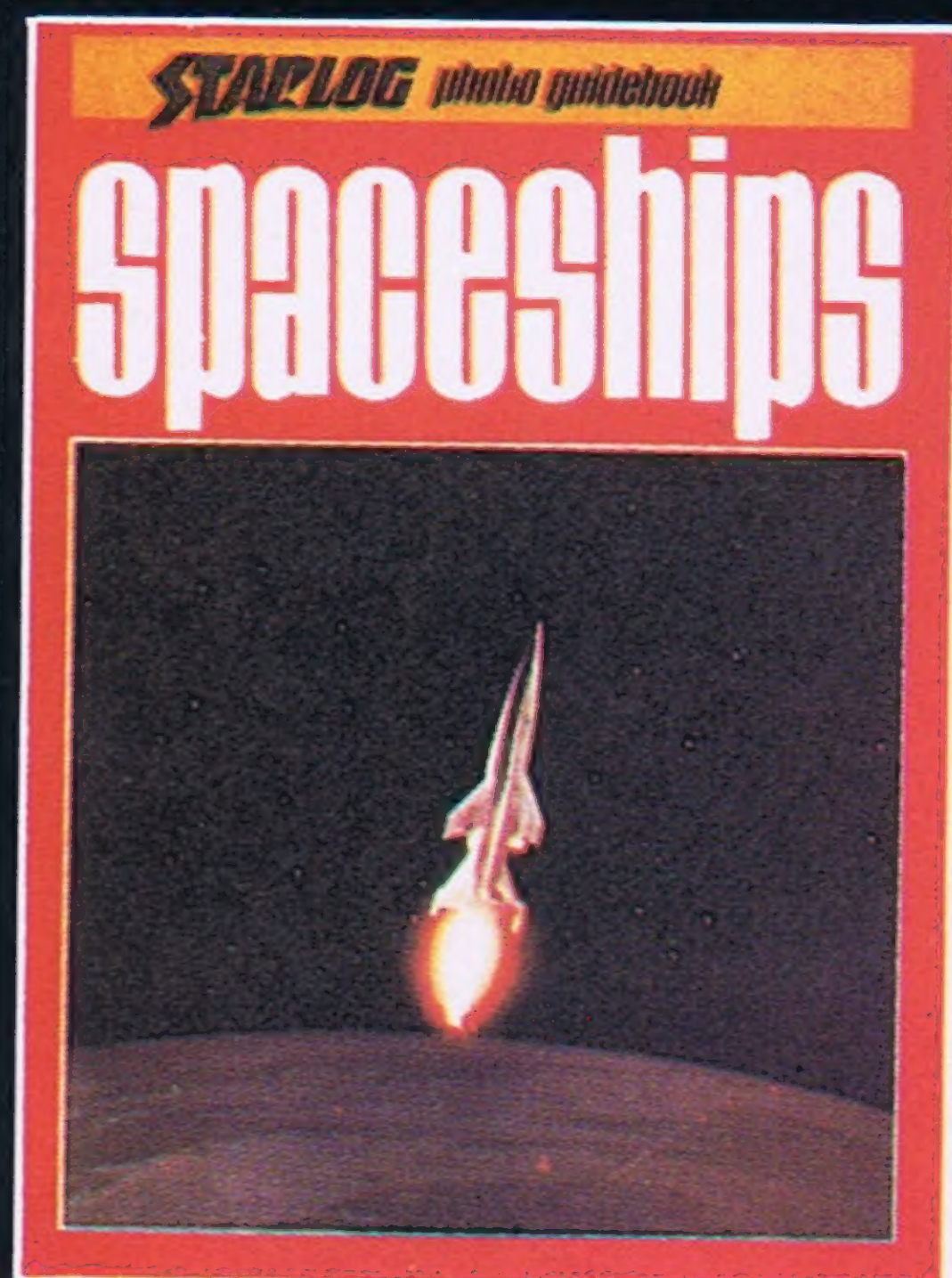
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